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CURRENT COMMENT.

IF Lord Curzon had ever given any indication of possessing a sense of humour, his proposal to refer the dispute over the sovereignty of Mosul to the British and French Governments, sitting as the Council of the League of Nations, might be called a masterpiece. This solemn bit of diplomatic mummery brought the farcical proceedings at Lausanne to an appropriate climax. Though the British Foreign Secretary, in the early days of the conference, was at great pains to assure the world over and over again that the inhabitants of Mosul were virtually unanimous in demanding the blessings of British rule, he brusquely rejected the Turkish demand for a plebiscite with the reply that such methods had gone out of vogue. It is clear, therefore, that the British Government is determined, at considerable cost if necessary, to keep this territory which it filched for itself under cover of a mandate. Naturally the Turks have no illusions about that bandits' clearing house, the League. They will not need long memories to recall what happened in Upper Silesia, when the rich coal-fields were bestowed by the League on M. Poincaré's docile little friend, the Polish Government, after the inhabitants had voted by an overwhelming majority to remain German.

IN a plebiscite in Mosul the indications are that the British Government would have about as much chance of carrying a majority as it would in the Moscow Soviet. The major part of the population consists of Mohammedan Kurds who have no natural attachment for the Nordic overlords, and their affections have not been intensified by the practice of the Imperial British forces of spilling bombs promiscuously from airplanes on the Mesopotamian villages, to remind the natives that taxes are due. Yet Lord Curzon insists that it is because of zeal for the welfare of the inhabitants, and for no other reason, that he is making all this uproar to keep the purloined territory. To quote a recent dispatch of the Associated Press, "Lord Curzon himself at to-day's meeting rebuked those who thought that England was interested in Mosul because of its oil-riches." What could be finer than that! He added a pledge that his Government would see that

privilege under other flags got its proper share of the loot; whereupon our Mr. Child piped up and declared that the American representatives were glad to associate themselves with Lord Curzon's intent. Truly the world is still safe for hypocrisy.

OBVIOUSLY, with the British Foreign Secretary enmeshed in such a palpable flim-flam at Lausanne, the British Government is in no position to make any effective objection to M. Poincaré's depredations in the Ruhr valley. Even if the two Governments had no fixed understanding in the matter, Lord Curzon would need the vote of Brother Poincaré in putting his Mosulian plan through the Council of the League; and if Mr. Bonar Law should speak sharply to his French ally for sending Central Europe to ruin, Lord Curzon's schemes might go to pieces. Moreover, M. Poincaré could put Mr. Bonar Law's Government to some embarrassment by pointing to Mosul and retorting simply, "You're another!" The situation is delicate, whatever way one looks at it, and only a rash prophet would dare predict whether the next war will break out first on the Rhine or along the Dardanelles. Thus far Mr. Bonar Law's Cabinet has stuck to its policy despite the growing pressure from solid British business-interests which have nothing to gain in Mosul and ever so much to lose in Germany. From their point of view Lord Curzon's pot of oil will scarcely compensate for the ruin of sixty-five million German customers. England lives by trade, and not by stealing remote mineral deposits for privilege; and this fact is so generally realized among the population that every day Mr. Bonar Law's position promises to grow more awkward.

SHALL the German industrial magnates get sixty per cent of the Franco-German iron and coal combine, and the French industrial magnates get forty per cent; or shall the French get sixty and the Germans forty? That is the whole point of the present irruption of brigandage in the Ruhr. M. Poincaré, who represents the Comité des Forges, is out for French control at sixty per cent; and he has gambled that he can force the German coal-owners to his terms before the French taxpayer finds out what is going on and calls his hand. The German owners, meanwhile, are putting up a good stiff fight. If they win their fight and get their sixty per cent, English interests will get a look-in; if the French win, English interests will get nothing. That is the sum of the matter; "reparations" cuts no more real figure than it ever did, except as something to keep the French taxpayer hopeful and confident.

OUR impression is, as it has always been, that the French will lose; however, it makes very little trade, whether the French or the German privileged interests lose. The point is, as we have all along insisted, that as long as this conflict of privileged interests goes on, enormous areas of production and commerce lie paralyzed and inert; and this cuts down international trade the world over. As long as Central Europe can not buy goods and pay for them out of its own produce, so long will general business in all the industrial countries go under half steam. More-

over, all the gains of privilege itself must be paid out of production. All in all, therefore, the French escapade in the Ruhr serves only to press more insistently the question whether or not privilege is worth maintaining at the price.

M. ANDRÉ TARDIEU keeps up his diligent defence of French policy, in special articles to the *New York World*. Last Sunday he said that "by trying to make Germany keep her engagements, France is working for the re-establishment of European peace, materially and morally," and complains that other nations give her no help. This reminds us of the doting mother who watched the parade, and said that "they were all out of step but John." Mr. A. G. Gardiner, on the other hand, asks impassionedly, "Can the English-speaking world stand by while Europe commits suicide?" Well, but how did Europe get that way? The British Government's perfidy over Morocco, its perfidy in making secret military and naval engagements with France and Russia—perfidy dictated by jealous fear of Germany's competition in industry and commerce—all this played straight into the hands of the French. Now that the French are where they are, it is highly competent to ask who put them there. If Mr. Gardiner would preface his cries of distress with a little honest confession, his plea would carry greater weight. At its present face value, his plea means only that English privileged interests stand a chance of getting the worst of the deal; and it is precious hard work to get up any great amount of sympathy with them in that contingency.

INASMUCH as President Harding has intimated on more than one occasion that the welfare of our country for the next few decades is largely in the keeping of the young men of the American Legion, the political utterances of the head of the Legion are of great public consequence. National Commander Owsley has already committed himself on the Italian Fascist movement, and has commended to his followers the example of Signor Mussolini's black-shirted exponents of force and violence. Commander Owsley's latest essay in statesmanship endorses M. Poincaré's seizure of the Ruhr, with a strong intimation that the American Government ought to send over a few divisions to assist in the brigandage. "The French marching into Germany to-day," he says, "are fighting America's battles as they fought them during the first two years of the war." It is clear that if, as Mr. Harding says, the destinies of our country are to be guided by the type of mentality represented by Commander Owsley, American taxpayers will have some uncommonly rough travelling. We suspect his blithe utterance will win few friends among the not inconsiderable body of Americans who are interested in foreign trade, and who must be watching with considerable dismay their half-billion dollars a year of German business being ruined to make a militarists' holiday.

SPEAKING of force and violence reminds us naturally of bishops, for during the war the higher clergy in all countries were peculiarly successful in sanctifying such forms of human activity. We note that Bishop Manning is quoted as follows in the newspaper-reports of a sermon at Yale University: "I have been watching with great interest that curious outbreak of sanity and good sense in Italy which bears the name of the Fascista movement." This is high praise for Signor Mussolini and his merry men, who have certainly shown on occasion no qualms of conscience about slitting a few throats here, or burning down a few houses there, in the course of their bold march to power. Signor Mussolini, of course, is a good

Christian; but from what we have read of the goings on of some of his followers, we fancy that the shade of Nero, as it sat toasting gently in the nether regions, must have been reminded of the good old days. Nero was out of luck in being born too soon to be appreciated at his true worth by the Church. To-day he might well be cited as an example of sanity and good sense. On the day after Bishop Manning's sermon, an enthusiastic Episcopalian clergyman suggested that the office of Archbishop of America should be created for him, as an appropriate recognition, one assumes, of his remarkable interpretation of the ideology of the gentle-hearted, great prophet of Galilee.

THOSE indefatigable humorists at Moscow will be the death of us yet. Last Saturday M. Chicherin sent a note to Lausanne, saying that although Russia had been excluded from the conference, she would still like to do all she could to make things easy and pleasant, and therefore she would undertake to establish a national home for the Armenians. M. Chicherin proposes to plant a large jag of these persecuted Christian brethren in Georgia and the Ukraine, and give them room to flourish according to their strength. This rather tends to make "the civilized nations of the world," which are mostly of the Christian persuasion, look a little cheap; and it also removes a "moral" embarrassment from the progress of the Turks. We wonder how these tidings will be received by American Protestantism. Will our churches stand by and see the downtrodden Armenians accept the hospitality of the scandalous and ungodly? If not, what alternative will they propose? It strikes us that they are in somewhat of a quandary; especially since Monday's dispatches say that the Armenians did not waste twenty-four hours in examining this gift horse's mouth, but accepted with alacrity. Still, it is not inconceivable that this dispatch may be contradicted within another twenty-four hours—such is journalism.

THE other day Mr. Hoover stood up at the convention of the National Sand and Gravel Association, and said that the disturbed condition of Europe was the only obstacle to the revival of prosperity in this country. At about the same time, the President of the National Wool-Growers' Association expressed the belief that the Administration had already done or would soon do all that it could to help the wool-men. The President of the International Association of Clothing Designers has just come along with the statement that wool suitings are due for a rise, and the Secretary of the National Merchant Tailor Designers' Association has backed this up with the statement that the price of tailor-made clothing will shortly be increased by twelve to fifteen per cent. This, perhaps, is what Mr. Hoover means by prosperity; but the consumer would understand him more readily if he said that the tariff-makers had helped the wool-men to find the golden fleece.

How, we wonder, will our good citizens mark their ballots in 1924, in order to express their distrust of entangling alliances and the League of Nations. They can vote for the Progressives (if any have been born) or for the Prohibitionists (if they are not all dead) with the full knowledge that they will not be elected, and will therefore not disobey the popular mandate; but our "Little-Americans" can not safely support the Democrats, and if Mr. Melville Stone is right, they will hardly feel like laying their money on the Republicans again. The other day the guests at a public dinner in New York City were informed by Mr. Stone that the Administration is gradually warming up to the League. Mr. Stone is director-

emeritus of the Associated Press; he knows more than he tells, and he is not likely to risk his reputation by cackling while the Goths are still far from the walls of Rome. In other words, he probably knows what he is talking about, and it is about time for the voters to look around for another gold brick.

THE American Embassy at Tokio and the American Consulate at Yokohama have become collection-agencies for the relief of the Russian "White" refugees from Vladivostok, who fled when the Japanese forces moved out and the Merkulov Government disintegrated, and are now under great hardship. This action of our representatives is thoroughly humane, and of course eminently proper too, for it is reasonable to suppose that these refugees are all orthodox Tsarists and prefer foreign domination in Siberia to the political control of natives who hold more progressive political views than they. In all, there are upwards of 20,000 of these refugees, scattered through Korea, Manchuria, China and Japan; and it appears that the exiled Merkulov, who is now living in luxury in Tokio, has made an appeal that they be cared for at the expense of the American Government, and eventually welcomed to our shores. This, it seems to us, would be carrying charity too far. Only a few, surely, could find positions in the Tsarist Division of our State Department, and the rest would inevitably become public charges. We have enough mediæval minds in our country without importing any. Besides, there appears to be no good reason why the refugees should not return to their homes in Vladivostok, since the Far Eastern Government has granted amnesty to all followers of Merkulov and all political dissenters, in which respect it is noticeably more liberal than Mr. Harding's Government.

Our truculent brother William Anderson, guiding spirit of the Anti-Saloon League of New York, is in trouble, charged with improper manipulation of funds. We suggest that people go a little easy about accepting this story until the evidence is all in; because up to the present, and without prejudice to any further developments, we are obliged to say that it looks like a "plant." We are down on William Anderson, and would not trust him with a cellarful of water; and if he and all his ilk could be *spurlos versenkt* by any fair and honourable means, we should heartily rejoice. Nevertheless, we can not quite stand by and see him rigged; and if he is being rigged, we shall have to take his part, however much against the grain it goes. Alfred Henry Lewis tells the story of a jury in Arizona which deliberated on the trial of a horse-thief, "and they brings in a verdict that they're sorry to say the evidence ain't enough to convict." That is precisely the way we feel towards William Anderson in his present plight.

OUR chronic industrial war has lately shown symptoms of acuteness in Arkansas, where the natives have undertaken to improve the railway-service by lynching a striking employee of the Missouri and North Arkansas railway. We doubt whether such methods will do much to speed up our halting transportation-system. In fact we have never known lynching to accomplish much except the brutalization of the community that indulges a passion for it. However, if our transportation-problem must be tackled via the rope and the stake, we would recommend to our lynching brethren a dispassionate impartiality. If lynching is good for the railway-employee who downs tools, then it ought to be equally good for the directors who sabotage both labour and equipment in order to pay dividends on watered stock. We may, of course, be doing these irate Arkansans an injustice to suppose that they

wish to confine their attentions to striking labourers. They may do so perforce, because sabotaging directors are less easily available for lynching-purposes.

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES has done about what might be expected of it, in passing the resolution to submit a Constitutional amendment to prohibit the exemption of State and municipal securities from taxation. By the time this amendment can become effective, there will be at least \$20 billion invested in these securities; and the effect of the amendment, therefore, will be to perpetuate the rich man's privilege of exemption from taxation during the life of these bonds. The original amendment was designed to give the appearance of "soaking the rich" without really doing so; this amendment-to-the-amendment has precisely the same design. No fiscal legislation ever passed by an American Congress ever had any other design, and as long as our system of government remains what it is, none ever will. We doubt, however, that the amendment will pass the State legislatures. The original amendment led to a wild riot of issuance in State and municipal bonds, thus giving State and city politicians no end of money for graft; and naturally, these brethren will be reluctant to stop up the source of such easy and copious supply.

ON another page, under the title, "Begin at Home," we make some observations which we think pertinent at this time, about the \$4500 million owed by the British Government to American taxpayers and the \$30 billion owed by the British Government to its own domestic creditors. Since our editorial was written, the news-dispatches from London have thrown some illumination on the closely-guarded "refunding" proposals recently made in Washington by representatives of the British Government. It appears that Mr. Stanley Baldwin and his colleagues proposed to cut the interest on their obligation to American taxpayers from the four and a quarter per cent which they are at present supposed to pay, to about two per cent.

WE gather from the cabled news that unless Mr. J. Bull can get some such terms from Cousin Jonathan, with the payment of the principal postponed indefinitely, the heart of the world will break, and all that sort of thing. Yet the amiable Mr. Bull goes on quite cheerfully paying an average interest of four and three-quarters per cent on the far greater sums he has borrowed from his own folks at home. If the British Government "refunded" the principal of its internal debt on the basis of eighteen shillings in the pound, or ninety cents in the dollar, a rearrangement for which there is precedent in British history, it would at once have on the credit-side of its ledger a sum equal to two-thirds of its American debt. If it scaled down the interest-rate on its internal debt by only as much as one per cent, it would save each year enough to cover all the interest on its debts to this country, and would still have enough left over for a sinking-fund to retire one-fourth of the obligation in ten years.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either as to substance or style. They are printed because, in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

HOW MUCH HAS GERMANY PAID?

OCCASIONALLY some sentimental American editor justifies M. Poincaré's policy of prosecuting the peace by invading the Ruhr valley, with the statement that Germany has thus far paid no indemnities and therefore the only way to get anything in that line is to go in and snatch it by force. There are just two criticisms to be offered on this point of view: the premise is untrue and the conclusion is impractical.

Germany has already been mulcted of a thumping big sum as the price of her defeat. Exact totals are not easily computed, yet certain figures have recently been published in various places, which give us at least a basis for estimates.

The New York *World* has printed a summary of reports secured from the Reparations Commission on the value of all indemnity-payments in cash and kind, to the end of last November, to which were added various miscellaneous items. The statistics read as follows:

Payments in cash and kind.....	\$1,900 million
Settlements of private debts	150 "
Paper marks requisitioned for armies of occupation as currency	140 "
Paper marks for expenses of armies of occupation	225 "
Expenses of Allied Commissions	11 "
Total	\$2,426 "

This summary is all very well as far as it goes, but it does not include a number of items of great magnitude. In *Whitaker's Almanac* the value of the coal-mines of the Saar valley, given to the French Government under the peace-treaty, is rated at \$100 million, which seems a conservative figure for a coal-field in which the value of the annual output is one-fourth of that figure. The Upper Silesian coal-fields turned over to Poland by the League of Nations must be worth at least double the value of the Saar beds. They are doubtless included, in part at least, in the item of \$600 million listed in *Whitaker* under "State property in ceded territory." With these two items our grand total of indemnities already runs up to \$3100 million.

This total, of course, does not include any estimate of German private property that has passed into Allied hands, in the lost German colonies, or in the 25,000 square miles of German continental territory taken from the Reich under the peace-treaty. It does not include any allowance for the value of the colonies as colonies. It does not include any allowance for German property confiscated in the Allied countries and in the United States and elsewhere during the war; though it probably does include German property such as vessels, railway-stock and cattle turned over to the victors since the armistice, and deliveries of coal and wood. As the *World* points out, the German property seized in the United States alone during the war was worth \$500 million. It is a fair estimate that the total property-losses of this character throughout the world run to two billion dollars. The German figures for the loss of the German mercantile marine, for the loss of German property confiscated outside of Germany, and for German rolling stock and live stock appropriated under the treaty, run to upwards of five billion dollars. If we accept Mr. Morel's estimates, recently put before the House of Commons, and cut the German figure in half, our own valuation given above, which does not include rolling stock and live stock and fuel,

and minor shipping turned over after the armistice, is still conservative. Thus our grand total in cash and property extracted from the crippled German nation passes the five-billion-dollar mark.

This sum total is half the amount which Mr. Maynard Keynes declared three years ago, before he revised his figures downward, that Germany could pay over a considerable period of years. It is nearly half the total indemnity-sum fixed recently as a reasonable expectation by Mr. Bonar Law. If one considers the tremendous disabilities under which Germany has laboured, with her whole internal commerce being carried on under alien commissions, her transportation-system greatly reduced and impaired, her financial system hopelessly disrupted, and her colonial sources of raw material completely lost, it is an impressive showing.

It does not require any German exaggerations to make one realize that these enormous losses have taken a heavy toll from the vitality of Germany. Fortunately we have something by which to measure the situation. We refer to the recent statement of Mr. Bonar Law that if England were compelled to pay to the United States her debt of four and a half billion dollars in the next twenty-five years the burden would bear crushingly on British industry and seriously lower the standard of living of the population. If robust Britain can not without great hardship pay out such a sum in the next quarter of a century, how much more do the Allied politicians think they can wring during the same period from impoverished, anæmic Germany? How far can they go without creating in Central Europe conditions of serfdom which will inevitably undermine the whole structure of European society?

BEGIN AT HOME.

WE have noted considerable lamentation in the British press over the failure of Mr. Stanley Baldwin, British Chancellor of the Exchequer, and his fellow-commissioners, to reach an agreement in Washington for "refunding," as it is euphemistically called, the debt of some four and one half billion dollars owed by the British Government to the American taxpayers. Among certain British editors there appears to be a disposition to intimate that the American creditors are harsh and close-fisted in attempting to hold their trans-Atlantic cousins, with whom they shared the hardships and triumphs of the great struggle against the enemies of civilization, to the letter of their bond. We do not know exactly what these editors expect of us, nor have we been thoroughly informed of the exact expectations of Mr. Stanley Baldwin; for his proposals and negotiations were discreetly shielded from the view of the American public who are the creditors in this case. As we have pointed out, the leakages of news that trickled from the conference-room indicated that Mr. Baldwin's bold public announcement when he landed on our shores, that Britain would pay every penny, was a bit of diplomatic window-dressing. However that may be, we have been studying the figures of Britain's debt to us and of Britain's public debt generally, and we find that the whole matter presents features which we trust have engaged the attention of Secretary Mellon's refunding-board and will engage the attention of Congress if and when a fresh refunding-proposition comes before it.

In British figures, the British Government's obligation to the American taxpayers amounts, with unpaid interest, to upwards of £900 million. Congress has authorized Mr. Mellon's refunding-commission to compound with the British Treasury for the repayment of

the debt over a period of twenty-five years, with interest of four and one-quarter per cent; which interest-rate is actually somewhat less than the average rate American taxpayers are paying and have been paying to the fortunate persons who hold American Liberty Loan bonds and subsequent re-issues. Mr. Bonar Law has stated that if Britain must pay within the conditions laid down by Congress, the burden of payments will oppress British industry heavily and will seriously lower the standard of living in Great Britain for the next quarter of a century. We believe this statement to be true, but none the less there is a joker in it. In making it, the canny and frugal Scot who is Prime Minister in the British Government neglected to canvass the possibility of "refunding" in other places where the revision downward would not be at the expense of American taxpayers.

For such operations the huge internal debt of the British Government would seem to offer an eligible field. Its amount is upwards of six billion pounds sterling, nearly seven times the amount owed to American taxpayers. The average interest-rate paid is considerably higher than that on the American debt; as nearly as we can figure, it is about four and three-quarters per cent; and, we may add, this is also the figure reached by certain American banking-authorities. British consols, it is true, bear interest at only two and one-half per cent, but these form only five per cent of the total internal debt outstanding. One-third of the domestic obligations consists of the issues of war-stock, on which the British Government pays five per cent; and one-fifth of National War Bonds, bearing interest at the same generous rate.

This was money borrowed in England and largely spent in England. The bulk of it, of course, is in the war-issues. We assume that the war-bonds were imposed on the British population by the same forcible methods that were practised in the case of the Liberty Loans in our own country, and that in the period of deflation following the war they tumbled into the hands of bankers and large investors. It seems curious that no responsible British statesman, and no British editor, has suggested cutting down the comparatively lavish interest on these greater obligations, rather than on the smaller American loan. It seems almost in questionable taste for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to come pleading tearfully to Washington about the dire hardship entailed in paying four and one-quarter per cent interest on the American loan, while his Government continues right cheerfully to pay five per cent to bankers and wealthy British investors on a sum over three times the American loan. Personally, if we were in financial straits and needed a little mercy from our creditors, we should prefer, in the interest of our own dignity, to tide over our difficulties by an arrangement with creditors in our immediate family, rather than journey 3000 miles to beg forbearance from foreigners. That, we think, would be a natural human impulse in such circumstances. Governments, however, like the heathen Chinee, are peculiar; which the same we are not prepared to explain.

Therefore when the London *Times* declares that to pay even three per cent interest on the American debt would virtually reduce the bulk of the British population to a diet of bread and water for two generations, we are left a bit puzzled; for the *Times* is obviously not at all concerned over its Government's paying an average of four and three-quarters per cent to its domestic creditors. When the London *Outlook* asserts that two per cent is all that can be paid annually on the

American loans, and intimates that the British Treasury is able to borrow plenty of money at that rate nowadays, we are immediately impelled to wonder why the British Treasury does not tap the generous source forthwith, and pay off the whole principal owed to the American taxpayers, who themselves can not secure such lenient terms for their obligations. At the same time we have a suspicion that interest at four and one-quarter per cent is no greater hardship for the debtor than interest at two per cent, if he actually pays no interest whatever.

On the whole, one is forced to conclude that the doleful groans emitted over this matter by the British politicians and the noble army of British publicists, while possibly sincere and spontaneous, are somewhat unprepossessing. We have repeatedly expressed ourselves in favour of wiping the British and other foreign loans off the books of the United States Treasury, primarily because we are convinced that the debtors are not going to pay, and secondly for the somewhat superfluous reason that if they did pay the process would be embarrassing to both parties to the transaction. This conclusion is clear enough in our mind; yet we are prepared to take off our hat and applaud the first plain-spoken American senator who will point out to our sometime war-associates and apparently all-time debtors in Downing Street, that repudiation, however painless and gradual, and under whatever name, might properly begin at home.

AN HUMBLE INQUIRY.

... You're the one German sailor who understands War. Kill your enemy without being killed yourself. I don't blame you for the submarine business. I'd have done the same myself, only our idiots in England wouldn't believe it when I told 'em. . . . Yours till hell freezes, FISHER.—*Letter from Admiral Sir John Fisher, head of the British Navy, to Admiral von Tirpitz, head of the German Navy; dated 29 March, 1916.*

A FEW weeks before the war began, a controversy took place between Lord Sydenham and Admiral Sir Percy Scott on the use of the submarine against merchant vessels in time of war. In a letter to the London *Times*, 16 July, 1914, Sir Percy Scott cited this extract from a letter from a foreign naval officer:

If we went to war with an insular country depending for its food on supplies from overseas, it would be our business to stop that supply. On the declaration of war, we would notify the enemy that she should warn those of her merchant-ships coming home, not to approach the island, as we were establishing a blockade of mines and submarines. Similarly we should notify all neutrals that such a blockade had been established, and that if any of their vessels approached the island they would be liable to destruction either by mines or submarines, and therefore would do so at their own risk.

It strikes us that the situation of the "Lusitania" could not be more accurately described from the German point of view. Germany went to war with an insular country, dependent on supplies from outside. She attempted just the sort of blockade here specified and gave notice accordingly. Very well—Sir Percy Scott's comment is as follows (italics ours):

Such a proclamation would, in my opinion, be perfectly in order; and once it had been made, if any British or neutral ships disregarded it, *they could not be held to be engaged in peaceful avocations*, and if they were sunk in the attempt, it could not be described as a relapse into savagery or piracy in its blackest form.

We wish to assure our readers that in the case of the "Lusitania," we are interested only in facts. The sinking of the "Lusitania" had uncommon importance

on account of the effect that it produced upon public sentiment and opinion in the United States. It will be admitted, probably, even by those who might not agree wholly with Admiral Fisher and Admiral Scott, that there is a considerable difference in both reason and law, between sinking an unarmed ship and an armed ship; a ship carrying munitions and a ship carrying none; a ship carrying troops and a ship carrying none; a ship sailing under her own flag and a ship masquerading under the flag of a neutral Power. In regard to these matters, we do not know, and do not pretend to know, the status of the "Lusitania" on her last voyage. We know that on at least one east-bound voyage, she sailed the zone of danger under the flag of the United States. As for the rest, the official inquiry into her sinking was held *in camera*, which was an unprepossessing proceeding; and the only official testimony of any consequence as yet available is the report of Mr. Malone. We have already paid our sincere respect to this document, and have shown cause for our inability to regard it as final—as indeed Mr. Malone himself has done. If Mr. Malone is unable to regard his report as final, why should we so regard it?

What we desire to see, and all that we desire to see, is that all the facts and findings in the case of the "Lusitania" should be made public. We wish to see all available evidence brought forward from every quarter. In recent issues we ourselves have laid down frankly and freely all the information that we possess. We have given a reference to *Hansard* which shows that four months before the outbreak of hostilities, Great Britain already had forty merchantmen under arms. We have also given a reference which shows the structural plans for the "Lusitania's" armament; though this, as we have said, does not make it necessary to suppose that her armament was mounted on her last voyage. We have also laid down certain facts in connexion with the actual sinking of the ship, which seem to us, and would seem to any disinterested person, we think, to have considerable significance. They are as follows:

1. The "Lusitania" was slowed down to twelve knots an hour in the zone of danger, which was approximately half-speed.

2. Her ports were open, her life-boats were swung in and covered, and there was no distribution of life-preservers.

3. A flock of destroyers which was lying in Queenstown harbour, could have given assistance and effected rescues, and did neither.

These are, we repeat, to the best of our knowledge and belief, facts. If they are not facts, we wish to know it. If they are ever disproved, we shall be promptly on hand with the *amende honorable* in full. But up to the present time, we have heard not one word in refutation of them.

None of the comment, verbal or printed, upon our utterances—and there has been a good deal of it—has made even the most remote reference to these matters; which seems, does it not? a little remarkable. It is not perhaps remarkable, unfortunately, that such comment as we have seen in the newspapers—even in the one New York paper that heretofore we supposed was a bit above that sort of thing—should confine itself to sheer mendacity and scurrility. But comment from honourable and decent sources has equally disregarded the evidential value of these facts; it has not challenged them, refuted them or discussed them, but simply passed them over in silence.

Now, we desire to be perfectly reasonable and easy-going about this matter. We know that the "Lusi-

tania" was under the orders of the Admiralty, like all other merchantmen making English ports, and if these were the Admiralty's orders, it takes more ingenuity than we possess to account for them except upon the one extremely disagreeable and repugnant hypothesis which we feel obliged to hold. We should be very glad if some one would furnish us another. After all, Mr. Winston Churchill is a vertebrated animal, and we could take no pleasure in thinking worse of him than we must; and yet, on the other hand, we know so well the professional roughneck's view of such situations—Admiral Fisher's and Admiral Scott's, for instance, which we quote above; and our own Admiral Sims's as set forth the other day in his prognostications about the use of gas by United States forces in "the next war." However, we may be wrong. Perhaps the captain of the "Lusitania" suddenly lost his mind; perhaps his confidence and self-will betrayed him into elaborate bravado. We do not know; we are quite ready, cheerfully ready, to accept any theory whatever, provided it rest on evidence at least sufficient to send a pickpocket to jail. At this juncture we merely remark that no such evidence, or anything approximating it, is as yet forthcoming.

THE PEACE OF CATHAY.

SOUTH of Hankow, across the Yangtze River, is the city of Wuchang, and beyond the city there rises a sacred mountain which was, until recently, the home of a very famous dragon. About thirty years ago, there lived in Wuchang an enlightened viceroy who learned the meaning of progress, and commanded that a steel-mill should be erected within view of the viceregal windows. However, the people of the city raised a great outcry, for they believed that the dragon was essentially unprogressive; and accordingly the enlightened viceroy had the plant erected on the other side of the river. In 1918, this plant was employing six thousand men in the production of steel rails, steel plates, and other like wares; and in the meantime the dragon had dozed off, and a tunnel had been blasted through the sacred mountain. The whole story is set down by Mr. Julean Arnold in the "Commercial Handbook of China," published by the Department of Commerce at Washington; and in this volume one may also discover many other particulars in regard to the revolution which is disturbing the peace of Cathay.

It has sometimes been said that China will never be industrialized, for the reason that these millions who have maintained themselves for so long by the practice of agriculture and the handicrafts, will simply refuse to hire out as machine-tenders. If the Chinese had large resources of free land, this might perhaps be true; but whatever may be the potential resources of the country, the system of petty proprietorship, with the equal division of the parental lands among the heirs, has actually reduced many of the peasant holdings to such minute size that they will hardly sustain life. The average extent of these holdings is from one to three acres, and some are only one-twentieth of an acre in size. Great famines like those of 1878 and 1921 have shown that many of the Chinese live always on the very margin of subsistence; and where such a condition exists, it seems unlikely that the factories will suffer from a shortage of labour. It is also true that the country has produced a considerable accumulation of capital which has hitherto been employed largely in trading-operations, but would no doubt be diverted in part to the development of industry, if the native financiers were once convinced that this development would bring them rich returns.

With an economic system which produces a surplus of labour, on the one hand, and a store of capital on the other, it would seem that China is more than ready for the industrial revolution, if only the Chinese people can be taught to use the products of the machine. The industrial revolution in the West has been in its very essence a revolution in consumption, as well as in production, and anyone who considers the situation in China is naturally moved to inquire whether a wholesale change in habits of consumption is probable or even possible.

For many generations, the wants of the Chinese people, in the way of manufactures, have been met with the products of a craftsmanship that is perhaps more highly developed than that of Western Europe in the Middle Ages. This craft-work is still being carried on, and the people are surrounded by its products, and subjected continuously to the influence of its standards of excellence. Is it likely, then, that they will accept machine-made goods in place of those to which they are accustomed? The answer seems to be that they will, and the best evidence of it is to be found in the statistics on imports as supplied by Professor Charles Hodges of New York University, in an interview recently published in the *New York Times*. These figures show that during the period 1910-1921, the total value of the imports increased more than four times over; and since the products of foreign factories form a large proportion of the goods imported, the inference concerning the change that is taking place in habits of consumption is obvious enough.

In connexion with this same matter of consumption, it has been said that even though the Chinese might be indifferent to the tawdriness of cheap, machine-made goods, they would never develop the voracious appetite which enables the West to swallow the output of so many factories. In the Confucian ethics there is some excuse for this belief, for Confucius did indeed prescribe different standards of life for the different orders of society, although he also taught that the individual should be permitted to raise himself from one order to another. The teachings of Buddha and L  o-tze were definitely ascetic in tone; but before we assign too much importance to Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, as checks upon consumption, it will be well for us to remember that the Christianity of the industrialized West is also, in theory, a religion of other-worldliness and self-denial.

Just how far the development of modern industry has already been carried in China, under the conditions which have been described, it is impossible to say, but Mr. Julean Arnold gives some interesting particulars in his "Commercial Handbook," published in 1920. For instance, it is estimated that one-half of the coal produced in China is drawn from mines equipped with modern machinery; the total output is nearly thirty million tons a year, or about fifty per cent of the annual production in the United States in 1880. In 1918, modern plants in China produced about five hundred thousand tons of pig iron, or about one-seventh as much as American plants turned out in 1880. In regard to the cotton-industry, Professor Hodges says that in 1900 the mills were mostly foreign-owned, and contained only about 200,000 spindles, while in 1921, two-thirds of the mills were in the hands of Chinese, and the number of spindles had increased to more than three million. For purposes of comparison, it may be stated that this last figure is larger than that for Japan five years ago, and is equal to about nine per cent of the figure for the United States at that time. According to Professor Hodges, most of the cotton-

mills operate six-and-a-half or seven days a week, with two shifts of twelve hours each, while some employ only one shift and extend the working-day to fourteen hours.

In all this there is little encouragement for the belief that China will escape the evils of the industrial revolution by side-stepping the revolution itself. As far as we can make out, the process is already well under way, and it seems to us quite unlikely that the termination of foreign interference would bring it to a halt. "The only way out is forward," and the best hope that this way will be found seems to lie, in the first place, in China's popular understanding of the value of a footing on the land, as it is embodied in the custom of dividing the parental holding, however small, among all the sons; and in the second place, in the popular distrust of statism and political Government, and the popular aptitude for voluntary association, as it exhibits itself in the guilds which still flourish in every Chinese city. Somewhere within these manifestations, the wisdom of the East may be working along towards the millennium. We do not exactly see how, of course; but is there very much in the experience of the West that would prepare us to see and understand?

A SLIGHT MISUNDERSTANDING.

It was a good distance out and down stream, and beyond the ferryman's house—there where the wilderness of the river-bank approaches close to the upper road along the river. We were going along this, I with a leisurely step and Bashan, a trifle in front of me, with an easy and somewhat lopsided lope. He had been chasing a rabbit, or, if you prefer, had permitted himself to be chased by him. He had also routed out three or four pheasants and was now graciously minded to pay a little attention to me, so that his master might not feel utterly neglected. A small bevy of ducks with extended necks and in triangular formation, flew over the river.

Suddenly on the farther bank, which was of the same steepness as our own, a man came beating out of the bushes. As soon as he had stepped upon the scene of action he assumed a pose which caused both of us, Bashan as well as myself, to halt and to turn round and face him and watch what he would do. He was a rather tall, fine figure of a man, somewhat rough and ready, as far as his externals were concerned. He had drooping moustaches and wore puttees, a small green Alpine hat which was well pulled over his forehead, wide, loose trousers which were made of a kind of hard velveteen or so-called corduroy or Manchester cloth, and a jacket to match. This was behung with all kinds of belts and leather contraptions, and he carried a *Rucksack* strapped to his back and a gun which also hung from a strap. Perhaps it would be more proper to say that he had carried this, for scarcely had he come into view, when he drew the weapon toward him, and leaning his cheek aslant against the butt, raised the barrel obliquely toward the heavens.

There was something most decidedly operatic in this apparition of the man as he stood reared against the skies amidst this open-air scenery of bushes, river and sky. Our intense and respectful regard, however, endured for only a moment; then there came the dull, flat report from over yonder. A tiny jet of light, pale in the broad of day, blazed forth at the same time, and was followed by a tiny cloudlet of smoke that puffed after it. The man then inclined himself forward and once more his attitude and his action were reminiscent of the opera. With the gun hanging from the strap which he clutched in his right fist, he raised his face toward the skies.

Something was going on up there, whither we, too, were now staring. There was a brief, confused scattering; the triangle of ducks flew apart, and a wild, panic-stricken fluttering ensued, as when a puff of wind sets loose sails a-snapping. Then suddenly the body which had been struck became a mere inanimate object, and fell swift as a stone upon the surface of the water near the opposite bank.

This was only the first half of the proceedings. But I must interrupt my narrative here in order to turn the living light of my memory upon Bashan. There are a number of coined phrases and ready-made figures of speech which I might use for describing his behaviour—current terms, terms which in most cases would be both valid and appropriate. I might say, for example, that he was thunderstruck. But this term does not please me, and I do not wish to use it. Big words, the big, well-worn words, are not very suitable for expressing the extraordinary. One may best achieve this by intensifying the small words and forcing them to ascend to the very acme of their meaning. So I will say no more than that Bashan *started* at the report of the gun and the accompanying phenomena, and that this starting was the same as that which is peculiar to him when confronted with something striking. It was a start which flung his whole body backward, wobbling to right and left; a start which jerked his head in sharp recoil against his chest and which, in his recovering himself, almost tore his head from his shoulders; a start which seemed to cry from every fibre of his being: "What, what! *What* was that? Hold! in the name of a hundred thousand devils! *How* was that!"

I regarded him with anxiety. After the fall of the duck, I was of the opinion that we had seen enough, and proposed that we should go on. But he had already sat down upon his haunches. His face, with ears erected to their utmost extent, was addressed towards the other bank, and when I said to him: "Well, Bashan, shall we go on?" he merely gave a flirt of his head in my direction, as though one should say, not without a certain rudeness: "Please do not disturb me!" and kept on looking. So I gave in, crossed my feet, leaned on my stick and watched to see what might now take place.

The duck—one of those very ducks which had so often in impudent security rocked itself on the water before our very noses, was driving on the water, a wreck; no one could tell which part of the bird was bow and which stern. No sooner had it landed in the water, however, than the man leaped, scrambled, almost tumbled down the escarpment. He carried the shotgun in his outstretched hand and once more I was reminded of the opera and the romantic novel as he went leaping down over the stage-like setting of the stone slope, like some robber-chieftain or smuggler bold in a melodrama. With careful calculation he kept a little to the right in an oblique direction, for the drifting duck was being carried away from him and it was necessary to head it off. This he actually succeeded in doing with the butt of his double-barrelled gun—extending this toward his kill with his body bent far forward and with his feet in the water. He managed to halt it in its downward course. Then carefully and not without much effort, he steered and piloted it against the stones with the guiding gun-butt and so drew it ashore.

The job was done and the man drew a breath of relief. He laid his gun upon the bank beside him, pulled his *Rucksack* from his shoulder, stuffed his booty into it, drew the sack shut by its cords, and slung it upon his shoulders. Then, supporting himself on his gun as on a cane, and thus pleasantly laden, he climbed complacently up the loose stone of the slope and made for the covert.

"Well, he's got his bit of roast game for to-morrow," I thought approvingly, yet not without envy. "Come, Bashan, let's go—there's really nothing more to see." But Bashan simply stood up and turned himself once around himself, then sat down and stared after the man, even after he had already left the scene of action and vanished among the bushes. I did not again ask him to come along; I refused to do this as a matter of principle. He knew where we were living, and if he thought it reasonable to sit here still longer and stare, after everything was over and there was absolutely nothing more to see, well, that was his own affair. It was a long way back and I for my part was going to return. Then at last he gave ear and came.

During this exceedingly painful journey homeward, Bashan refrained from all further inclination to indulge in the sport of the chase. He did not canter on ahead of me in a diagonal direction as was his wont when he was not in the right mood for trailing and beating-up the game. He walked a little behind me, keeping regular step, and drew down his mouth in a way which I would be bound to notice when I turned round to look at him. This might have been tolerated, and I was not going to let it ruffle or upset me; on the contrary, I was disposed to laugh and shrug my shoulders. But then every thirty or fifty steps he began to *yawn*, and it was this which embittered me. It was this shameless, wide-angle, rudely bored yawning, accompanied by a little piping guttural sound which clearly said, "My God! talk about a master! Why he isn't a master at all. He's simply rotten!" This insulting sound nearly always disturbs me, but this time it was sufficient to shake our friendship to its very foundations.

"Go!" I said, "go away! Go to your master, the man with the thunder-club, and join up with him. He does not appear to own a dog and so he might give you a job. He may need you in that business of his. He is, of course, only a plain man in corduroys, and no particular class, but in your eyes no doubt he is the finest gentleman in the world—a real master for you. So I honestly advise you to go and make up to him—now that he has put a flea in your ear—to keep the others company. (Yes, I went to such extremes as this.) We need not inquire whether he has a hunting-permit or not, and it's quite possible that you might get into difficulties when you happen to be caught some fine day whilst engaged in your shady work, but then that is your business, and the advice which I have given you is, as I have already remarked, most sincere.

"The devil take your hunting," I went on. "Did you ever bring me a single rabbit for our table out of all those which I permitted you to chase? Is it my fault that you don't know how to do a quick turn and like a fool go pounding into the gravel with your nose at the very moment you should be showing your agility? Or have you ever brought me a pheasant; which would have been just as welcome in these lean times? And there you are now—yawning! Go to that master with the puttees, I say. Perhaps you are under the impression that he would call in the aid of science and permit you to be observed in case you decide to have occult hemorrhages, perhaps you are under the delusion that once you were *his* dog, you would also have a chance to be nervous and anæmic. If so, you had better go to him. Yet it may be that you are making a great mistake with regard to the respect with which this kind of master would display towards you. There are, for example, certain fine points and differences for which such gun-bearing persons have a very sharp nose, natural merits or demerits—or to make my allusions clearer, very awkward questions regarding pedigree and breed. If I must express myself with

superlative clearness, then I must say that there are things which not everybody is disposed to ignore with that delicacy and humanity to which you have been accustomed; and should your husky master, upon your first difference of opinion with him, reproach you with that goatee of yours, and call you an unpleasant name, then think of me and of the words which I am now addressing to you."

It was in such bitter irony that I spoke to Bashan as he slunk behind me on the way home, and even though I spoke inwardly and did not permit my words to be heard, so as not to appear eccentric, I am nevertheless convinced that he understood perfectly well what I meant, and that he was capable of following at least the main line of my argument. In short, the quarrel was serious, and having reached home, I purposely let the garden-gate fall behind me and Bashan was forced to run and clamber over the fence. Without casting a single glance behind me, I went into the house, and heard him give a squeak, as a sign that he had prodded his belly on one of the pointed pickets; something which merely produced a mocking shrug of the shoulders on my part.

But all this happened long since—more than half a year ago. Time and oblivion have buried it deep, and upon the drifting bottom of such things as these—which constitute the base of all life—we continue to live on. Bashan to be sure, appeared to be rather contemplative for a few days, but he has long ago recovered his full and undiminished joy in hunting mice, pheasants, rabbits, and water-fowl; and our return home means to him merely attendance upon the next going forth. Whenever I reach my front door, I turn around and face him once more, and that is the signal for him to come jumping up the steps in two great leaps in order that he may raise himself on his hind legs and stem his forepaws against the front door, so that I may pat his shoulder and say good-bye.

"To-morrow, Bashan," I remark, "we'll go out again; in case I don't have to make a trip into the big outside world." Then I hurry into the house to rid myself of my hob-nailed boots, for the soup has been served and stands smoking on the table.

THOMAS MANN.

(Translated by Herman George Scheffauer.)

THE EMERGING FACTORY IN RUSSIA.

"WHAT would become of the workers if there were no capitalists to give them employment?" This was one of a series of argumentative questions propounded some time ago by an American society for combatting bolshevism, radicalism, socialism and other vague and pernicious isms. The inquiry was all the more crushing because the experience of Western Europe and America provides material only for hypothetical answers. Since the coming of the factory-system, Russia is the only industrialized country where the large-scale private employer has been completely eliminated from the scene. The new economic policy of the Soviet Government has resulted in the leasing of some small undertakings to private individuals; but it has not affected the concentration of all basic industries and large factories in the hands of the State. So it is to Russia that one must go in order to find out what becomes of the worker when there is no capitalist to give him a job.

One can not be very long in a Russian factory without somehow running into the *zavkom*, or factory-committee. This body has a wide range of powers and duties. It makes the best possible bargain about wages with the factory-management. Its approval must be secured before a man can be discharged. It receives a special appropriation for cultural work from

the factory-management. This money is spent in arranging concerts, lectures and entertainments, and in organizing courses in reading and writing for illiterates. The scope of the *zavkom* extends to such matters as finding out through which co-operative bread can be bought most cheaply and securing rooms for workers who suffer from the prevalent Russian housing-shortage. Only the most progressive American unions have gained a degree of control over working-conditions comparable to that possessed by the Russian factory-committees. Anything like the *zavkom* would, of course, have been simply unthinkable in pre-revolutionary Russia.

A still more significant manifestation of the new industrial democracy in Russia may be found in the method of selecting the factory-managements. Leaving out of consideration the inconsiderable number of plants which are leased to private individuals or to foreign concessionaires (these establishments, by the way, are held strictly to the observance of the whole code of Russian labour-laws, including the statutory eight-hour-day), Russian industries are organized in State trusts, each of which includes a group of geographically or economically related factories in the same industry. These trusts are under the administration of managing boards appointed by the Supreme Economic Council, the central body which controls all the Russian State industries. The trust-management in turn, with the consent of the union (the Russian unions are all organized along industrial lines) appoints the individual factory-managers. Sometimes the process is reversed, and the union puts forward candidates of its own, subject to the approval of the trust. The factory-managers who are selected in this manner are usually ex-workers, with long records of service in the revolutionary and trade-union movement.

I met one of these "red directors," as the revolutionary factory-managers are called, in a large electrical factory near Kharkov. He described the technical processes of the work so competently that at first I was inclined to set him down as an old engineer who was more or less willingly reconciled with the new regime. My first doubt about the accuracy of this judgment came when the manager pointed out a new varnish-preparation which had been invented in the factory during the time when nothing could be imported from abroad. "The blockade was a good thing for us in some ways," he said. "It taught us to be less dependent on foreign capitalists." A little later he proudly showed a large motor, the first of its kind to be manufactured in Russia, and remarked that it had been produced under the workers' and peasants' Government, and not under the old regime. After this I asked him something about his background, which proved similar to that of most of the other Russian industrial directors whom I met. A veteran revolutionist, he had achieved the highest mark of distinction in present-day Russia: a prison-sentence under the Tsar. Along with his illegal political and trade-union activity he had somehow managed to pick up a good deal of practical and theoretical knowledge about his trade as an electrical worker; enough at least to qualify him for his position in a country where few of the former trained engineers and specialists can be relied on to give faithful and whole-hearted service.

I was not technically competent to judge how far this worker-manager's unquestionable devotion and enthusiasm made up for his lack of regular training in engineering. But it was impossible to mistake the

excellent morale which prevailed in the factory. The management and the workers had achieved a higher degree of co-operation than would be possible, I think, under the most liberal system of private ownership. Here, of course, the human element was very important. A manager who was one of the workers in spirit and in previous occupation, who had led them in their hard struggle for a better life under Tsarism, who had fought and suffered in their cause; such a man naturally had special claims upon their confidence and respect. When he appealed to the workers to put up with some temporary hardship or to raise production, he was not compelled to rely solely upon threats of discharge or promises of high wages.

Moreover, the stockholder, whose undefined but large claims upon the profits of industry constitute a serious obstacle to the realization of the most sincere proposals for co-operation between management and workers, does not exist in Russia to-day. The workers in the Kharkov electrical factory had a most direct interest in heightened production, because all the profits of the enterprise were distributed among wages, plant-extension and increased facilities for comfort, education and recreation. The workers, through the union and the *zavkom*, had an adequate voice in determining that the share assigned to their own benefit should not be too small. This perhaps explains why, although the production of the factory was held back by the difficulty of getting fuel and raw materials, the productivity of each individual worker had reached the pre-war standard; a remarkable fact in view of the sufferings which the Russian workers have endured during the last five years.

I obtained another view of the spirit of the new Russian factory by attending the opening of a school for adolescent workers at this same electrical plant. Child-labour in Russia, it should be explained, is not permitted up to the age of fourteen. From the ages of fourteen to sixteen, four hours of work, accompanied by four hours of study, is the rule. From sixteen to eighteen the working day is six hours, with two hours devoted to study. The previous school-room-facilities for the young electrical workers had been very cramped and inadequate. Now that the factory had a little more money, it was possible to start a better school.

The chairman of the *zavkom* presided at the opening, and the room was crowded with factory-workers, worn and gaunt from years of struggle and privation. The boys who were to attend the school were also there in large numbers, roughly and sometimes raggedly dressed, but full of vigorous enthusiasm. There were many speeches, all quite short and simple, with only a few dramatic episodes, as when the whole audience rose for a moment in memory of the fellow-workers who had fallen in the long, cruel war with the Allies and the Whites. All the speakers, from the factory-manager down to one or two of the boys themselves, who stammered out a few words of acknowledgment, followed one common train of thought. The young workers owed a great obligation to their parents, who had preserved their freedom at the cost of incredible sacrifices. They could best repay this obligation by studying hard and learning to build on this freedom a life of plenty, such as the Russian masses had never known.

After the speeches there was a little feast, with black bread and bologna and tea, while one of the instructors, who had formerly lived in Scotland, led the boys in a series of cheers which suggested the sidelines at an American football game. Two workers

came up to me and eagerly asked whether American labour understood and sympathized with the working-class democracy which they were trying to build in Russia. The mention of American labour immediately suggested Mr. Gompers, whose lurid pictures of the horrors of Soviet Russia have never seemed more unreal and fantastic than at that moment. However, I tried to do justice to Mr. Gompers's viewpoint.

"Do you really have any freedom," I inquired with becoming severity. "Don't the Communists hold you down with the bayonets of the Red army?"

The first response of the workers to these questions was one of vague perplexity. Then they laughed. Finally one of them replied, his words fairly tumbling over each other in his anxiety to explain:

"Do people really believe stories of that kind in America? When Denikin was here in 1919 we had more bread because the Allies were helping him. But we knew very well that if Denikin won there would be an end of all our unions and factory-committees and workers' schools and a return of the old conditions of slavery. So we had one strike after another. They weren't passive strikes either. Every night some of us would go out, at the risk of our lives, to blow up a bridge or tear up a railway-line. There was less food after Kharkov was retaken by the Soviet troops. Sometimes we only got half a pound of bread a day. But we never thought of calling a strike against our own workers' Government. As for being held down by the Red army, most of us who were young and able-bodied volunteered to serve in it and some of our best fellow-workers died in it."

Among the many unfounded accusations that have been brought against the Russian revolution, that of wanton and exceptional cruelty is certainly one of the most unfair. With its existence threatened by attacks from without and from within, the Soviet power has been, I think, neither more nor less ruthless than any other Government would have been under similar circumstances. The legend, now apparently circulating in America, to the effect that the Cheka shot 1,666,666 victims is worthy of a place beside the *canard* about the nationalization of women. The revolutionary Government, however, has not hesitated to strike mercilessly at every revolt against its authority.

For the enslaved industrial workers of Tsarist Russia, however, the revolution has unquestionably meant a new era of humanity. Most of the Communist leaders have themselves passed through the hardest apprenticeship of modern industrialism. Some of them are tubercular from lack of ventilation; some of them have been mutilated by a carelessly safeguarded machine. Their elaborate laws for the protection of labour, therefore, are not products of doctrinaire theory, but rather the expression of a passionate desire to sweep away the abuses which have bitten so deeply into their own lives. Repeatedly and independently I encountered evidence that these laws are being enforced. Once I met two doctors who had just left a factory after testing the air to find out whether the ventilation facilities were adequate. Again I happened to be in a store when an inspector from the Bureau of Labour came in to find out whether the regulations about overtime work and the maintenance of sanitary conditions were being observed. In one factory I saw a rather complicated chart of individual productivity. Upon inquiry I learned that the normal output for the eight-hour day was based upon the worker's maximum productivity for six hours. "We don't expect men to work like machines," said the manager in explanation.

It is not only in the removal of oppressive and unhealthy conditions of labour that the humanizing influence of the revolution makes itself felt. The Russian factory is tending more and more to become a genuine centre of community-activity for its workers. A textile factory which I visited in the suburbs of Kharkov was supplied with every kind of facility for recreation and education. There was a large school for the children of the workers and a communal nursery where the babies were well taken care of. There was a hospital, spotlessly clean and equipped with a remarkably adequate supply of medical and surgical appliances. The workers had their "proletarian" club and their "proletarian" theatre, where they sometimes produced plays of their own and sometimes were entertained by musical and dramatic companies from the neighbouring city. It is hardly necessary to say that all these things were quite unknown to the Russian worker before the revolution, when the Government vodka-shop often furnished his sole means of amusement. No doubt the modest comforts possessed by the textile workers are more than matched by the welfare-work undertaken on a large scale by some of the American corporations. But there is an important difference between the two cases. The Russian textile workers are complete masters of their own community life. Their clubs and schools and hospitals do not depend upon the whim of a benevolent employer.

This same factory supported several children's homes, which were located in the villas of former Kharkov millionaires. Here perhaps a hundred children, picked up last year in the starving regions of the Volga valley and the Kirghiz steppes, had been nursed back to normal health and were now thoroughly enjoying themselves under a balanced regime of work, play and study. Russians are not usually at their best as administrators, but they know apparently how to take care of children; and the light, airy villas, filled with the children's own drawings and paintings and decorated with flowers and moss gathered in many woodland excursions, did not in the least resemble the gloomy and forbidding orphanages which are found so often in England and America. The chairman of the factory-committee, a tall, fair-haired Russian, the type which one often finds in this position, was especially proud of the children's homes. I asked him whether the workers were quite willing to assume the financial burden of supporting these refugees.

"Oh, we are very clever about that," he replied, his guileless face assuming a comical expression of profound cunning. "The *savkom* never forces anything on the workers that they are unwilling to accept. Whenever there is a question of taking ten or twenty new children, we take aside the more intelligent and responsible workers and say to them: 'Well, comrades, we may not have enough to eat ourselves, but at least we aren't dying of hunger like the people on the Volga.' Then these workers push the less conscious ones; and in the end we always get the children accepted without any trouble."

The new Russian factory is emerging from the storms of the revolution under conditions of extreme economic hardship. The figures for the production of coal and oil and metal are printed on the front pages of the Russian newspapers and watched as anxiously as the temperature of a patient in a high fever. Since the whole economic life of the country is only slowly and painfully beginning to recover from the abyss into which it was plunged by war, blockade and famine, the present-day existence of the Russian worker is

inevitably full of poverty and hardship. Yet what has already been accomplished, at least in the more fortunate factories, in the way of a humanized and democratized industrialism is deeply significant and full of hope and promise for the future.

WILLIAM HENRY CHAMBERLIN.

ALICE MEYNELL.

I ONCE heard Alice Meynell described as a guest in her own house, and I immediately recognized the wisdom as well as the wit of the phrase. The wit was obvious; so also was the physical picture of the poet sitting by the fire and talking with a vague recognition to her visitors, and always—so it seemed to me—wearing the hat that suggested a casual call upon herself. One felt sure that she had dropped her card as she came in; one expected to see her take her leave after the statutory twenty minutes. Even on the rare occasions when I saw her without her hat, on the Sunday evenings when she brought out a piece of knitting—the same piece of knitting every time, I could not help suspecting—and we drank a strange compound of hot water and black-currant jam with no more than a faint suggestion (in the steam rather than in the taste) of whisky, she retained the air of a guest who would be consulting the railway-guide in the morning.

Then a glance at Sargent's drawing which hung on the wall behind her chair, revealed the wisdom of the wit. The great painter had turned aside from his patrons, the fat, overdressed and bediamonded dowagers, the fat Jewish millionaires, to make the portrait of his friend; and from that sad face, the gesture of those hands, and all the lines of that slender body and the little tilted head, shone a beauty not of this world. Not of this world, I say, for none would have called her beautiful according to the measurements of the sculptor. Her beauty radiated from within, an aura, an emanation of the mind, with, as St. Basil said of Christ, a starry look. Francis Thompson's Elizabethan extravagance was no more than sober truth; this was a lady whose body other ladies well might wear for soul.

Her personal distinction was inseparable—to those who knew her—from the distinction of her work. But in her work—that is, her literary work, for eight children and many social ties absorbed a large part of her energy—perfection was a fixed habit. No essayist more steadily avoided "the facile literary opportunity"; no poet ever had a sharper horror of "the ungenerous art of the inferior." She was inflexibly insistent upon the small points of good literary usage, just as St. Teresa, to whom she was in so many ways akin, was ready to be a martyr, if necessary, for so small a detail of Catholic faith as holy water. To her comprehensive intelligence nothing was small: slovenliness and the second-rate were her detestations; and grammar was actually a momentous matter.

There was no trace of pedantry in her precision; nor was she precious in her style. But her style's exactness, coupled with its waywardness, achieved the effect of the remote, of the unfamiliar. She laid claim to the use of a neglected vocabulary; she wished such "a literary and a familiar restoration as would make our language again more various and more charming, and yet would not turn the speech poetic to vulgar use, nor decrease the dignity of what Jeremy Taylor at his prayers called 'the essential and ornamental measures of address.'" She protested against the dwindling range of selection, the blunting of the edge of language, because "rhythmic prose is hardly possible, when it has the charge of thought, without some degree

of a like liberty of choice, and modern prose in all language has, obviously, for the lack of this liberty—for lack of rich alternatives—somewhat forgone the practice of rhythm."

Since her insistence upon accuracy was a defence of liberty, primness would have been impossible to her. So, too, the gift of laughter was hers, though it has frequently been denied by those who demand to see the jest disentangled and allowed to stand alone. Even in her profoundest conceptions—should I not say, most of all in her profoundest conceptions?—dwelt a shy spirit of laughter. It is that happy presence in her poem "Christ in the Universe" which gives restraint to the bathos of science:

But in the eternities,
Doubtless we shall compare together, hear
A million alien Gospels, in what guise
He trod the Pleiades, the Lyre, the Bear.

O, be prepared, my soul!
To read the inconceivable, to scan
The million forms of God those stars unroll
When, in our turn, we show to them a Man.

It is again in her poem on Shakespeare, where she tells herself that had she lived in the sixteenth century she could have "seen that cradle, marked those labours, closed that earth"; and where she imagines herself talking "little language" to one whose lips were just learning how to speak.

Such humour is like the singing of the spheres, too sweet to be heard; but it is not too rare to play lightly over all her work. Forced though it may seem to link its delicacy with the boisterous humour of Chaucer or Dickens, a link does exist, thin but strong. Despite appearances to the contrary, she had something of Falstaff in her. That quality is in the opening of her essay "The Horizon," though I am quoting the passage merely as an example of her style:

To mount a hill is to lift with you something lighter and brighter than yourself or than any meaner burden. You lift the world, you raise the horizon; you give a signal for the distance to stand up. It is like the scene in the Vatican when a Cardinal, with his dramatic Italian hands, bids the kneeling groups to arise. He does more than bid them. He lifts them, he gathers them up, far and near, with the upward gesture of both arms; he takes them to their feet with the compulsion of his expressive force. Or it is as when a conductor takes his players to successive heights of music. You summon the sea, you bring the mountains, the distances unfold unlooked-for wings and take an even flight. You are but a man lifting his weight upon the upward road, but as you climb the circle of the world goes up to face you.

It was mainly to poetry, however, that Alice Meynell—reversing the usual procedure—gave the last years of her life. Unlike as she was in many respects to her contemporary, Thomas Hardy, she stood beside him here. To her his own fine valedictory might have been applied:

Sophocles, Plato, Socrates,
Gentlemen.
Pythagoras, Thucydides,
Herodotus and Homer—yea,
Clement, Augustin, Origen,
Burnt brightlier towards their setting-day,
Gentlemen.

Alice Meynell certainly burnt brightlier towards her setting day. Each of her late poems—and they were as good as any that she ever wrote—was a surprise. Her readers knew that she was old; her friends knew of her increasing fragility. It was a source of continual astonishment that a dying woman should so abound in genius, in courage, in gaiety. I am reminded

because of the contrast, of a vain, irascible, old man with a fondness for composing epitaphs for his friends, who were few, and for his enemies, who were many, writing for himself in his desolate loneliness:

I warmed both hands before the fire of life;
It sinks and I am ready to depart.

Hardy displays a more robust and genial attitude. But he also is full of modern despair. Alice Meynell is removed from both. She, the Catholic, has in her style as much Greek economy and austerity as Landor. It is Hardy, the sceptic, who has a style of Gothic exuberance to expound his hopeless pessimism. In his most glowing moment, Hardy speaks as an ancient to ancients; in her saddest moment, Alice Meynell speaks as an ancient to the young.

The flight of time was always Mrs. Meynell's preoccupation and her characteristic theme. But time itself varied the form of expression it took. In youth she wrote "A Letter from a Girl to her Old Age":

The one who now thy faded features guesses,
With filial fingers thy grey hair caresses,
With morning tears thy mournful twilight blesses.

It was in youth, too, that she saw "The Young Neophyte" already lighting the tapers at his head and feet, and laying the crucifix on his silent heart. But in old age she looks back tenderly upon the young. Poem after poem is the elaboration of a central idea—youth and age. That on Shakespeare to which I have already referred, is an instance of it; another is her poem to the early dead in battle, where she comforts them with the assurance that there is no length of days but theirs: the old have, at best, their memories—Time's mystery has already done for the young all that it can do:

Therefore be satisfied;
Long life is in your treasury ere you fall;
Yes, and first love, like Dante's. O a bride
For ever mystical!
Irrevocable good,
You dead, and now about, so young, to die,
Your childhood was; there Space, there Multitude,
There dwelt Antiquity.

"Time's Reversals," a variation on the same theme, published in the London *Mercury* for December, 1921, is the most touching of paradoxes. Mrs. Meynell remembers that Dr. Johnson—whom, to her honour, she always honoured—dying thirty years later than his wife, who was twenty years his senior, for ten years therefore looked back on a younger wife. She then thinks of her father, whose mortal years her own have exceeded, "claiming some strange respect from you, the dead":

Nay, nay! too new to know
Time's conjuring is, too great to understand.
Memory has not died; it leaves me so—
Leaning a fading brow on your unfaded hand.

And in the last of her published poems, "Rivers unknown to Song," which appeared in a recent number of the *Atlantic Monthly*, she broods on the youth and not the age of ancient rivers, Peneus, Danube, Nile.

For they are new, they are fresh; there's no surprise
Like theirs on earth. Oh, strange forevermore!
This moment's Tiber with his shining eyes
Never saw Rome before.

Man has no word for their eternity—
Rhine, Avon, Arno, younglings, youth uncrowned!
Ignorant, innocent, instantaneous, fresh,
Unwelcomed, unrenowned.

It was to such a renewal of youth that Alice Meynell naturally came; naturally, because she possessed the secret of the supernatural. It is a religion of sorrow that keeps the heart's joy sweet; but a philosophy of pleasure turns even pleasure sour. Her experience, which was rich and mature, led only to a deeper innocence than her youth could comprehend. "I bind," she once wrote, "Innocence and Experience in one, and take them as a sign of the necessary and noble isolation of man from man—of his uniqueness." She was ready for death; her dedicated life has come to its close. It was a life in which there was nothing to regret, nothing to unsay. That liberal mind, that generous heart, going from us, bequeath a noble example of the literary vocation. She had always viewed the world *sub specie æternitatis*. She had kept her cell, a solitary amid activity, the Paradisal air about her, a heavenly *incognita*.

Then the truth all creatures tell,
And His will Whom thou entreatest,
Shall absorb thee; there shall dwell
Silence the completest
Of thy poems, last, and sweetest.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

MEDITATIONS.

HERE and there, in life and in literature, one is sure to encounter an exclamation of surprise at the unexpected, sudden goodness of scapegraces; and this goodness, which surprises us by its very existence, surprises us still more by something uniquely natural and spontaneous in it, as if it came from the very heart of virtue. Good actions of this kind are so unspoiled, so like flowers, because they come out of virgin soil; for the ne'er-do-well has never raised the Devil in himself by subduing him, and both his good and evil are unpremeditated and natural. Virtue and vice can come out of him very easily, therefore; and we, who are bound so inexorably in our circle of conscience, admire actions achieved in this way, too facilely and with excessive generosity. Perhaps there is at the bottom of our hearts the hope that the transgressor has put himself by his act of grace on the first step of the difficult stair of morality, up which we are fated, both by circumstance and by our reflection, to climb for the remainder of our life. . . . The true hero of morality, on the other hand, creates not a few of the hardships over which he triumphs; and it may be that he creates them because he loves hardship as a strengthener of his will better than the end to which his will is directed. Here, as elsewhere, men get, not immediately, never immediately, but ultimately, at the very last moment, what they want.

ORDINARY people, who strive for a mediocre and praise-worthy goal, and who attain or do not attain it with great difficulty, are generally disappointed in successful men; these seem not to have striven enough to deserve their success. This probably will always be the case, for it is a condition of a certain kind of success not to "deserve" it. Ultimately the secret of success, which can not be learned, might put itself in words somewhat like these: I can walk over any line if I do not stop to reflect, "I am walking over this line." If one thinks long enough over the possible it becomes the impossible. If a man determines to be great he is not great. But also, for one must allow for every chance, if a man determines to be great he may already be great.

To accomplish some labour with ease is not a sign that it was not worth doing, or that one deserves no credit

for it. On the contrary, the ease with which it was done shows that one deserves a great deal of credit, for it proves that one has taken the right means.

THE reason why men of genius such as Tolstoy had such an extraordinary admiration for peasants was not on account of the humility of that class, but because peasants represent humanity better, possess a greater number of essential human qualities, and are in all vital respects richer than the reading-class sophisticated by culture, or than the intellectuals who can so easily become miracles of emptiness. The intellectual slowness of the peasantry is a very small defect compared with their virtues: their sureness in their relation to nature, which bears them; their humility, not as an attitude, but as something spoken into their souls by the earth itself, by the changing seasons and uncertain weathers; their perseverance which is like the perseverance of the crawling year; and the eternity of their attitude which remains unchanged in the surf of fashion which thunders continually over the world. These qualities, which an intellectual may well not have and as a rule does not have, are so much greater humanly than his quickness and pliability (all that he has), that clear-sighted men such as Tolstoy could not but see it. Yet the greatest and wisest men have sought the society of intellectuals rather than of peasants, whom they have preferred to admire at a distance. The reason for this, however, was simple. They did not seek out the intellectuals because they admired or even approved them; but simply because the intellectuals can talk well about certain secondary but intensely interesting things.

PARABLE OF THE DEMOCRATIC PHILOSOPHER. A philosopher who loved the people and believed that they were capable of thought, possessed a truth which he wished to communicate to them, so he went out one day and explained it very obscurely, for, he said to himself: "It is more important that I should give them a few hints, so that they might discover the truth for themselves and thus prize it more and at the same time exercise their minds, than that I should give it to them quite finished to become in a few weeks a mere shibboleth." But the people were not satisfied. Some said that he was a charlatan, others that he was mad, while a few angrily demanded that he should explain himself, hinting that in an obscure manner he had been making innuendoes about them to their faces. The philosopher, still unwilling to renounce his first purpose, now threw his truth into the form of a parable. Everybody was pleased; the author acquired quite a reputation as a fanciful writer, and the critics declared that there was so much fantasy and invention in his book that he would be bound to succeed as a poet. Thereupon he obligingly disguised his truth in a sonnet sequence, for he was equally determined to please the public and to stick to his first resolution, and the sonnets passed off very well, although nobody knew very well what they were about. "This will surely set them thinking," the philosopher said to himself, but it did not after all; and, finding that all his ruses had failed, he announced modestly one day what he had tried to do, by means of his riddle, his parable and the sonnets. But the critics indignantly turned upon him, and declared that he was either a conceited poseur, or else indulging a joke at the public's expense. But a very young editor, more enterprising and more credulous than the rest, accepted the philosopher's word and invited him to publish his idea, copyrighted, in a special edition of a daily, offering him five thousand pounds and a knighthood at the next birthday-honours as an inducement. The young man waited for six weeks but received no reply. The philosopher had himself forgotten by this time what his truth was.

PARABLE OF THE PHILANTHROPIST. A very rich man who pitied the misfortunes and diseases of mankind decided to give his fortune towards their alleviation. Observing that the poor had colds in winter, he distributed Brown's Cough Cure to every humble household in the kingdom which he decorated. In time his sympathetic eye discovered so many discomforts, griefs and bodily ailments among them, that in succession he had to endow them with hot water bottles and the mollifying works of Max Beerbohm; and as they sunk into deeper lassitude, the desperate and uncritical gift of a complete medicine-chest. But ills seemed, nevertheless, to increase; and the people looked so pale, and tottered so pitifully when they went out, that he was afraid every moment that they would fall down in the street. So he ordered a hundred million crutches and had them conveyed in sufficient numbers to each family. All the people now went about on crutches; each family was for the time a convalescent paradise; and everywhere the happy, if weak, voices of the people called down blessings on their benefactor, whom they set next to God. But one day two men happening to meet in the street and chancing to quarrel, they came to blows, and finding their fists inadequate to their rage, began to lay on enthusiastically with their crutches. Others coming on the scene took one side or the other, and soon there was a battle raging from one end of the town to the other. When night came there were a hundred thousand people slain, besides those who had broken heads, arms and legs. This event caused a great outcry, and some pointed to the philanthropist as the prime causer of the butchery. His beneficence which had hitherto been praised universally was now blamed as inconsiderate and excessive; and a few saw behind it a deep plot to reduce the people to weakness in pursuance of some design to enslave and crush them. "See how feeble we are now!" they cried, "We have to totter around on crutches where once we walked on our own legs." This reflection enraged them so much that they rushed in a body to the philanthropist's house, and when he opened the door they dispatched him with their crutches. Then, with an enthusiastic appreciation of poetic fitness, they buried him and stuck a crutch over his head, afterwards making a bonfire of all the remaining crutches at the market cross. . . . A week afterwards one hundred thousand of them, with black eyes, were thrown into prison for making a riot in the streets (the root cause of this disturbance was said to be a packet of fried chips); and as they served their terms it is recorded that they once more began to regard the philanthropist as a man of almost superhuman virtue. At any rate they removed, with public demonstrations, the crutch from his grave, had it plated with fine gold, and having built a church, called the Church of the Crutch, hung it up near the altar.

A MAN in a black suit, a stiff collar and a bowler hat, in a green field, with the sun shining, is a figure so grotesque that all nature cries out at it. A bird or an animal is never an absurdity on the earth; a man, clothed or naked, is always so. Our eyes should be sufficient to tell us that the earth is not the final and destined habitation of man.

AS AN ACUTE GLADIATOR SAW IT: It is conflict which keeps us from being absolute self-contained units: if we did not hurt one another we should be completely egoists. It is conflict, therefore, which makes us "understand" one another, showing us the necessity for union, and eventually uniting us. It is conflict, accordingly, which has forged common sympathies and concepts, and has given us the consoling ideal of "suffering humanity": for humanity suffers from itself. When I am happy I

feel: "How happy I am!" But when I am wretched I feel: "How poor humanity suffers!" . . . But the peace-loving man said in reply: "Not at all. When I am happy I feel that everybody is happy. But when I am sad, then I feel that everybody else is happier than ever, and I want to slap all their faces."

ONE of the best ways of ensuring that one should do something badly is to make a vow to do it.

A NEW truth, simply because it is new, is more true than an old one, simply because it is old. Even if the new truth is hardly distinguishable from the old one, it has more vitality, more power to realize itself anew within peoples' minds, for it has been renewed as the generations of men are renewed, becomes contemporary, and is brought, almost like the crowds in the streets, into all our lives. Nevertheless, this is valid only for certain truths, and especially perhaps for philosophical truths, and even there it is valid only for the majority of people, for the unphilosophical. Pragmatically there is an immense value in new truths: they have the power of making a popular revolution in thought, and in making that revolution, of bringing back peoples' minds to a realization of the truths which are eternal.

THE only people who can spout platitudes are those who are a little clever, but not quite clever enough. To be successfully trite one needs a certain intellectual equipment. A stupid man can not utter a platitude; the sincerity of his stupidity, and his single-mindedness, preserve him against that fate. The most unfortunate of all men is he who is endowed with a little cleverness, for a little cleverness makes everything false.

EDWIN MUIR.

LETTERS FROM ABROAD.

BLUFFER STATES.

SIRS: The picture I carry as the result of my one day's stay in Kovno, the capital city of the Republic of Lithuania, is something of a cartoon. In it, Lithuania resembles a small ragamuffin squatting in one of the Ghetto-streets of Kovno, quite besmeared with mud, shaking one clenched fist at Russia, the other at Poland, and thrusting out her tongue at Latvia. While one is tempted to go to her and advise her to stop all this useless threatening, one is checked by the realization that the poor country has been charged with the honour of being a buffer State, and that she has assumed the rôle with all of the seriousness of a chauvinistic lady with no sense of humour. I dropped into Kovno *in medias res*—in fact, quite out of the clouds.

Flying parallel with the river Pregel out of Königsberg, East Prussia, across the Lithuanian border towards Kovno, one gets a fairly clear conception of the historical development of Lithuania. The city of Königsberg, the outpost of Teutonic cleanliness and order, is a model of the smaller towns which come into view like pictures baked out of marzipan. North-east of the border, however, the country glistens in the bright sun with marshes, pools and little lakes. The woods of birch, small pine and scrub oak straggle off into the fields and the meadows. The contrast, like an applied lesson in geography, seems to show the reasons for the occupation of this territory by the native Lithuanians who were driven there by the Prussian barons and the Poles. What lives had not been lost in the past for the sake of possessing these unattractive acres! As one looks down from the plane, one can visualize the battle which raged in these parts in the late summer of 1916, when the German guns and mortars

smashed to bits the apparently impregnable fortresses of Kovno. Or one pictures the Grand Army, in the winter of 1812, breaking the flag-staffs of its eagles in order to make fires to warm the frozen ground for the breaking open of graves for its generals and the glory of Bonaparte.

The plane came to a halt on the flying-field of the Lithuanian army, where some dozen planes, which constitute the aerial fleet of this comic-opera Republic, were twirling their propellers noisily in order to make an impression on prospective American concession-hunters who could afford to take the aerial Concessionaires' Limited to Moscow. Close to the hangar an automobile bearing the red flag on its hood, was waiting for the mail which the plane was bringing for the Russian mission. After watching the airship rise above the air-drome and disappear toward Moscow I took a seat in the car and, in a drizzling rain, made an inglorious entry into Kovno. Perhaps the drizzle did Kovno an injustice—and then again perhaps it is difficult to conceive how anything could be really unjust to that city. Of course the proper capital of the Lithuanians is Vilna, now unjustly held by the Poles; but at the present time, Kovno, the mud-city on the Niemen river, is the metropolis of the Republic.

There are two things which thrive in Lithuania—military parades and speculation in currency. These are innovations. There are two things which refuse to die out in Kovno—the dirt and the Ghetto. These are historical relics. As we crossed the Niemen river and entered the main business-street of the town we were greeted by a scene which gave me an insight into the social life of this Northern Bagdad. In immediate juxtaposition—under the gables and the cornices of the old houses, are signs in what seem to an English-speaking person the two most grotesque tongues, Lithuanian and Yiddish. Under these trade-banners stood old Jews in caftans, and robust Lithuanian peasants, some holding their squealing and protesting live stock; waiting for the rise and fall of prices on this bourse of the new Republic. The principal business-thoroughfare runs into the Avenue of Liberty, Kovno's Unter den Linden. It is something of a boulevard. Its marks of distinction are the Russian Orthodox church, now converted to a Roman Catholic church, Kovno's only and best hotel, and the Soviet Mission. For the entertainment of the citizens the Almighty and the treaty-makers of Versailles have given Kovno a Government, military parades, and an occasional provincial travelling troupe of Russian actors, besides the inevitable Lithuanian amateur atrocities.

As the train begins to cross this country and one regards the almost primitive ways of agriculture, one begins to wonder how it happened that the sages of Washington granted recognition to this State while they denied it to Russia—and then again one does not wonder. Whatever industries there were in these old Russian guberniyas which make up Lithuania—and there were very few—have been completely destroyed during the frequent hostile occupations. The country has a very limited coast-line and no adequate port. The agricultural population is less than two million, and is divided into four antagonistic races. Lithuania is surrounded by former conquerors on all sides, and is an excellent ground for political intrigues. Her budget exceeds her taxes; and her individualistic and narrow national policy, as well as her geographical position, promises no rapid industrial development. Without the assistance of a crack real-estate salesman it would be difficult to convince anyone, except perhaps our State Department, that Lithuania has political or economic possibilities at all approaching those of the country she is supposed to be guarding—Russia.

Of the neighbouring State, Latvia, the Russian futurist poet, Mayakowskyi, says in a poem entitled "How they fare in a democratic Republic":

Well, to be a Government, one must have Territory.
Territory—she has it, almost a county and a half.
But lest some one would learn the State secret
All the trains from the border start at night.
You sleep—while the train keeps going forwards and
Backwards—and then it turns on its tail.
You wake up in the morning, feeling as though you have
crossed an entire continent,
But behold—you are still a hundred versts away from Riga.

Although Latvia is somewhat smaller than Lithuania, if one considers the Vilna district as Lithuanian by right, she has far greater industrial possibilities, owing to her ports. Without Riga, Libau and Windau, Latvia would be but another Lithuania. But Riga is her saving grace and her economic salvation. Like most of the seaport-cities of Europe, Riga has suffered since the conclusion of hostilities because of the decline of shipping everywhere. What was once a thriving town with a busy port-life, is now reduced to an unimportant partial outlet for the small Russian foreign trade which flows through Latvia's capitol. Whatever the disorganization of Russia's industries has not done to ruin Riga's economic prosperity the makers of treaties have accomplished in creating barriers and fostering a narrow nationalism which is making trade difficult.

But whatever a short-sighted Government may be doing to emphasize nationalism at the expense of national prosperity, it can not destroy the beauty and the antiquity of the city of Riga. In many ways it is a unique city. Think of a town where one can call telephone-numbers in three different languages, a capital where the entire navy of one old warship forms the attraction of serious Rigan burghers out for their Sunday morning stroll along the Dvina river front. It is a German town, inhabited by Russians and conquered by Latvians. The daily press, printed in the three languages, contains as principal news of the day reports of the doings of the Soviet Government. I happened to be in Riga during the three days when they were holding their national elections. No less than twenty different factions vied for the doubtful honour of misgoverning these agricultural people.

This old Hanseatic town, founded in the thirteenth century by a German archbishop, has seen many changes. Swedes, Germans, Poles, Russians and Letts have each written part of its story in steel and blood. In the old part of the town, the business part, the lights are out at ten. I wandered alone through its winding streets, past houses built in the Middle Ages. The early autumn moon gave a theatrical aspect to the lanes and avenues leading on to the water front. Forgetting the convulsions of present-day European political life, I lost myself completely in this silvered antiquity. Slowly my lonely footsteps echoed past the curious sentries. I peered at shuttered and screened doors in the pleasant hope that at any minute they would open and out would tumble helmeted and plumed knights. But the illusion was dispelled by the sight of two French warships in the moonlit Dvina river, keeping up, here in Riga, French political prestige and the expenses of the French taxpayers. Back of them, across the river, loomed up the wrecked and dismantled factories of the world-famous Prowodnik Rubber Works. French warships silhouetted against the ruins of a Russian factory—that and not the moonlit Hanseatic streets, represented the present-day reality of Latvia's metropolis. I am, etc.,

Riga.

CHARLES RECHT.

MISCELLANY.

THERE is a good chance now to study the impressive differences in national representation here, and on the strength of what one sees, to ask oneself the question, What is civilization? "The civilized nations of the world," as Mr. Hughes modestly called them, are represented chiefly by bankers, politicians and political propagandists of a journalistic type. France sends us M. Clemenceau and a rather sorry specimen of her drama. England sends Mr. Stanley Baldwin and Sir Robert Horne, flanked by a whole army-corps of pervasive and inconspicuous "mixers." Russia, on the other hand, sends us out of the darkness of her barbarism the Moscow Art Theatre and the Chauve-Souris! Judged strictly by their exhibits, which nation would one say is the more highly civilized?

AN English acquaintance of mine has lately moved into a most sumptuous flat uptown, and complains bitterly that the arrangement of the rooms makes privacy impossible. He says that the general layout of American houses and apartments, and their tendency to portières and open doorways, shows that there is in our people a culpable indifference to privacy. Perhaps the more general prevalence of central heating-systems has had something to do with this, but no doubt the habit of "living all over the house" is firmly fixed among us. Another Englishman once remarked this habit to me, years ago; he said that English life was a continual chorus of "Shut the damned doors!" and American life a continual chorus of "Open the damned doors!" Both peoples probably run to excess; we in gregariousness and the English in reticence. But my friend's point was well taken; however little we ourselves may care for privacy, we ought not to organize our disrespect for it in our architectural arrangements.

THE subject reminds me of an interesting remark made the other day by the head of a great house-furnishing firm. He said that in practically none of the houses that he is furnishing nowadays, and particularly those that he is putting in shape for young couples, is he called upon to make any provision for book-shelves. The statistics of this matter would be worth looking into, if there were any way to get at them. Still, too much might be made of the obvious inference that people nowadays, especially young married people, do not read anything that is worth shelf-room. Considering the kind of education that they have had, it would be surprising if they did. I can not imagine a person passing through our secondary schools or colleges, and retaining any intellectual curiosity, or any concern for books, or even any conviction that books are worth reading for any better purpose than to kill time.

THEIR children and grandchildren, however, will do differently; they will have other and larger views of life and will make larger demands on life: so for the present one must content oneself with that assurance. Even now the tide is unquestionably setting towards a type of education that will meet these larger demands. It is interesting to see now, at the end of forty years, how much the "scientific" type of training has done in some directions and how little in others. It has given us innumerable trained experimenters, first-class reporters, and has immensely stimulated inventive genius; but it has not given us intelligence of the first order, even in its own line. It has given us plenty of Wattses and Stephensons, Edisons and Marconis; but it has not produced a Huxley, Lyell, Tyndall, Darwin, Spencer, or even, I think, a Faraday.

I WAS reminded of this lately in the course of re-reading Ignatius Donnelly's "Atlantis," one of the most fascinating books ever written. I am not enough of an archaeologist and anthropologist to have any opinion about the soundness of Donnelly's great speculation; but a great speculation it nevertheless is, and one is bound to give enormous admiration to the scope and range of his researches in behalf of it, and to the excellent literary method employed in his synthesis. No matter whether Donnelly was right or wrong; the point is that he was able to make great generalizations and bolster them up with a deal of ingenuity. Darwin and Wallace had that type of mind; so had Lyell and Herbert Spencer. Henry George's works show the highest and most continuous exercise of the scientific imagination ever exhibited by an American. I wonder whether it would be possible for the strictly scientific training of the American schools to develop this type of mind. It might, perhaps, but I hardly see how it could do so, and I never heard of its having done so, even approximately. But, returning to Donnelly's book, I am rather surprised to find that it is still in print, for I thought that it had gone into temporary eclipse, like many another good thing of its period. Whatever its scientific value, it is a most interesting literary study, and as captivating to the imagination as an old-style dime novel.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

FISHERMAN.

With a golden pole and a line of silver,
Death, the old fisherman,
Stands for ever by the somnolent waters which are time,
And draws from their sunless depths
Silver trout that were princes and high kings;
Golden carp which were lovers once where the slow, green tides
come in;
Steel-blue salmon (and they were warriors); rainbow fish (and
they were merchant kings);
Fat, sluggish fishes out of churches like castles of rock in a
gold-fish bowl;
Baby fishes, and the sleepy fishes of the wise.
(And sometimes,
Tired of angling, he casts into that sea the copper seine of
war!)

With what does he bait his hook, I wonder, that the stupid fish
are always caught,
And when will he tire (fishes are fecund things!)
And throw himself down in despair into that solemn sea?

HOWARD MUMFORD JONES.

LAD JASON.

When Jason was a little lad
He must have had for friend
An uncle who could whittle boats
And rig up sails no end,
A man who knew how shields should hang
Along a galley's rail to clang
When wind-whipt yardarms bend.

Lad Jason must have had a pond,
Perilous in a breeze,
Where golden craft of yellow leaves
Came drifting from the trees,
Each gilded boat a ready prize
To such stout ship as grandly plies
Below a boy's bare knees.

And surely there was somewhere by
A pine woods that told tales
And whispered sagas full of deeds
Through summer's sunny gales,
A wood that brought all treasure sands
And all the wonder of far lands
Before a boy's small sails.

But if he lacked all else, he had
 A brother who could bring
 The dancing fire of a mind
 That would become a king,
 Whose sparkling brain was sweet as dew
 With breathless things to plan and do
 And story-birds a-wing.

ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN.

THE THEATRE.

NOTES ON CURRENT PLAYS.

Nor long ago I went to see Mr. John Barrymore in "Hamlet," and came away with this remark of Goethe's running through my mind: "Second-rate actors are excellent in great plays. They have the same effect that the figures in half-shade have in a picture; they serve admirably to show off powerfully those which have the full light." This performance, acted by good, competent actors—acted, withal, with great respect and considerable intelligence—sends one away with a renewed sense of the greatness of the play. Mr. Barrymore is not a great actor, but he is a good one; and his very failure to approximate the Hamlet of Shakespeare threw the character into the "full light," and set one marvelling anew at the passionate, sensitive, complex and tragic figure that Shakespeare has created in him. Moreover, the grateful underplaying of the whole cast served admirably to throw up the heroic proportions of the play; one's attention was not distracted by the virtuosity of any of the performers; and this is much to be thankful for.

It should be remarked, however, in fairness to Mr. Barrymore and his supporting cast, that not all one's renewed admiration of the play as a play was due to the "half-shade" quality of the performance. A good deal of it must be ascribed to the fact that the dramatic values of the piece received their full measure of attention. There has been too much of a tendency to act "Hamlet," as indeed, the whole of Shakespeare, in the Dryasdust tradition. "If we wish to know the force of human genius," said Hazlitt, "we should read Shakespeare. If we wish to see the insignificance of human learning, we may study his commentators." From a good many Shakespearean performances one gets the impression that they have been prepared with a too careful reference to Shakespeare's commentators, and too little to the great dramatist himself. The result may be compared to a performance of a Euripidean tragedy by the reverent and utterly uncomprehending pupils of a young ladies' seminary. It must be said, to the credit of Mr. Barrymore and his company, that they were not estopped by Dr. Dryasdust, or even by their reverence for the supreme playwright himself, from seeing this play as a play, full of drama and even, occasionally, of melodrama, and from playing it in that way. I have a suspicion that Shakespeare himself probably regarded the play in that light.

It would be interesting to see "Hamlet" acted by the players of the Moscow Art Theatre. It is in their repertoire, I understand; but it has, quite naturally, not been announced for their American season. The Art Theatre would hardly undertake, during so short a season at least, to present "Hamlet," in Russian, to an English-speaking audience. None the less, I should like to see them play it. One wonders how much resemblance it would bear to the "Hamlets" we have known. Very little, I imagine; it would no doubt be a quite different thing, yet I am certain it could not help being very good. For these Russians are great actors; great in their grasp of the play they are pre-

senting, and great in their interpretation of the characters they represent. Above all, it seems to me, they are great in their ensemble acting. They seem to have a quality almost unknown on the American stage: respect for the intention of the playwright. No character among them ever attempts to focus attention upon himself, at the expense of the other actors and of the play.

There are so many things that American actors may learn from these visitors, that one hardly knows where to begin enumerating them. There is the matter of voices, for instance. It was in his voice, it seemed to me, that Mr. Barrymore failed most emphatically as Hamlet; his voice fell on the ear with all the crushing monotony of Mr. Jones's progressively fatiguing setting. It is astonishing how little American actors in general are able to express with their voices. Not so with these Russian players; their voices are flexible, expressive; they convey not only the mood of the character, but all the subtle variations of the mood. Too much, moreover, can not be said about their proficiency in the art of gesture, in which American actors are as deficient as they are in the vocal art. There is no American actress, so far as I am aware, who can even remotely approach Mme. Knipper-Chekova in the eloquent and beautiful use of her hands; and I have seen no actor who could compare with any man of the company in this respect, except Chaliapin; and he is a Russian.

It may be argued that gesture is more natural to the Russians; that Americans are not a gesticulating people. This is perfectly true; no doubt the art of gesture may, on this account, be more easily mastered by a Russian. Still, American actors must use their hands, and I see no reason why, since this is so, they should not learn to use them beautifully and expressively. I am reminded of an example of ineptitude which is somewhat extreme, perhaps: Miss Barrymore's weak and futile waving of the index finger, in both "Rose Bernd" and "Romeo and Juliet." That gesture, to mean anything at all, must be made positively; for it is a gesture of definition—it is appropriate only when it accompanies a "laying down the law." As Miss Barrymore used it, it meant nothing at all; and obviously, if she had used it properly and beautifully, it would have been wholly inappropriate to either of the characters she was portraying. No; it may not be as natural or as easy for Americans to use their hands as it is for Russians; but that is no reason why gesture should be practically excluded from the equipment of our actors.

I say this with no intention to cavil at the shortcomings of the American actor. He does the best he can, under the unfavourable conditions that obtain in the American theatre. It is utterly impossible for an actor to develop great artistry, or even proficiency, unless he have the opportunity to play a great variety of rôles; and this is possible only in a repertoire theatre. The players of the Moscow Art Theatre have had the inestimable advantage of playing all sorts of rôles: Ivan Moskvín, for instance, during the three weeks of the company's New York season, has impersonated the tragic Tsar Fyodor Ivanovitch, the ineffectually benevolent old pilgrim in "The Lower Depths," and the ridiculous Yepikhodov in "The Cherry Orchard." Only long experience in repertoire could have given him the ability to play each of these widely diverse characters with the proficiency that he showed in each of them. Moreover, only long associations can enable the players of any company to give performances as harmonious as those of the Art Theatre. None the

less, our actors can, and no doubt will, learn much from these Russians; and it is to their credit that they asked the Moscow Art Theatre to give its mid-week matinee on Friday, in order that they might be given the opportunity to see and profit by the performances.

SUZANNE LA FOLLETTE.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE CAMBODIAN DANCERS.

SIRS: With regard to the article on "The Cambodian Dancers" by Miss Florence Gilliam, in your issue of 10 January, it may perhaps interest your readers to know that Cambodian dancing is the result of Hindu influence on Cambodia in the past, as are also Cambodian architecture and many other aspects of Cambodian civilization. The instruments used by the Cambodian musicians, the symbolic language of the dancers' gestures, the training which the dancers are given from their childhood, are all of Hindu origin. I am, etc.,
New York City. V. B. METTA.

CONCERNING SECESSION.

SIRS: It has been amusing to watch what is called the "present generation" during their reception of the movement misnamed *Secession*. At first they did not realize the unseemliness of speaking of their youngers exactly as their elders speak of them, but soon they devised less obvious ways of not informing themselves seriously. For people have a way when they suddenly know their own ignorance, of filling their void, not with fruits of experience, but with husks of preconceptions. As these "generations" are hardly more than ten years apart, it is funny that they deliberate so little before making up their minds about one another, though it is perhaps too much to expect that they should try not to confound intellectual affairs by spreading misapprehensions of new developments. Indeed it seems rather to be the business of some to further this sort of thing and to inflate the public interest by later corrections in the form of more inaccurate superficialities. "Never face an issue," is a maxim not confined to politics.

On 6 December, Mr. Louis Untermeyer hastened into print in the *New Republic* with a résumé of *Secession*, reducible *au fond* to the thought-complex: "critical (=sterile)." It being my good fortune to know that these "young" writers are prepared, with drawers full of manuscripts and clippings from those uncommercial papers which drug the market, to dispel this impression that sterility makes for judgment, or vice versa, I wrote to Mr. Untermeyer that his "new patricians," as he chose to call them, seem more concerned with "critical" than with "creative" work only because of the niggardliness of editors who keep them at reviewing all the time. Mr. Untermeyer asked, in a very nice reply, how he could possibly be expected to know of these young men's unpublished work, a question which, I think, no one can answer for him, but which nevertheless alters neither the facts nor the impression he has helped to make current which is at variance with the facts.

These writers need no defence, particularly from one who is least among them, and I do not write in a spirit of controversy, but out of the respect I bear your paper. Gladly enough I leave the tares in liberal papers alone, but when such appear in a radical paper they should be rooted out. You have plowed in error and I should like to see you sow in rectitude.

The editorial in your issue of 10 January, entitled "Secession," is reducible *au fond* to: "aesthetic (=unserious?)" Now we are not living in 1890. The present connotations of the word "aesthetic" are clearer to Mr. Untermeyer than to you, and your thought-complex is, if anything, stranger than his. Most strange is your conclusion that my "generation" is arid of faith, for their good works are redolent with its odours. Again it is my good fortune to know: Mr. Damon is mystical (which is not saying he likes Maeterlinck or Aleister Crowley). Another, though without capacity for enjoying Mr. Cram's written work, is a New England sort of neo-Platonic high Anglican (which is not to say a frequenter of the Advent). Mr. Munson has avowed his

enthusiasm for Americanism (taking the word in every other than the political sense). Only half-informed persons reading with half attention the published writings of Messrs. Cowley and Burke could fail to perceive in the second something strange, which may be either neo-Scholasticism or reworked Spinoza, and in the first something rather familiar which has usually, as soon as recognized, been called Classicism. Another is naïve enough to speak of such a thing as the "greatest painter in the world," and, within this stupid limitation, intelligent enough to pick El Greco. I am sure that no one who grants faith to the Romantics could read the writings of many of the others and deny faith to them. A few have neither developed nor disciplined their faith; only a few have formulated theirs; yet all have the capacity of taking premises on trust, and of living "from," "by," or "for" them. Therefore, good *Freeman*, though you may not care to eat your words, pray let your readers see mine. I am, etc.,
Cambridge, Massachusetts. JOHN BROOKS WHEELWRIGHT.

THE FRENCH SHAKESPEARE.

SIRS: I went the other night to see "The Merchant of Venice" at the Odéon, the National Theatre. I thought I knew the play well enough to follow it in French, but alas, poor Shakespeare, he was of infinite jest, all right, by the time the Frenchmen had turned him over. The translation and arrangement had less relation to the actual text, than a prose version by Charles Lamb. The general story was maintained, but wherever the original author had neglected to develop his idea, the adapters supplied the want—whether it was a bit of business, a speech, or a complete scene. The play opens with a casket-scene, or rather with a combination of the Morocco and Aragon casket-scenes. Morocco, robbed of his dignity and heroic manner, is reduced to simple black-face comedy, his fine speech beginning "Mislike me not for my complexion" being entirely eliminated. The Old Gobbo scene—fairly close to the original—follows, after which comes a garbled arrangement of the scene between the young men and Antonio, and then the scene with Bassanio, which is interrupted by Shylock's entrance, and the pound-of-flesh bargain.

Next we see a scene in the Ghetto, showing Shylock and his compatriots plying their trade, a scene much like the bazaar-scene in "Kismet." This ends with Antonio coming in, confessing his losses and pleading for mercy with Shylock, who does the "eyes, organs and dimensions" scene—addressing himself almost entirely to his fellow-merchants, and, to my mind, thereby killing the whole scene.

The elopement of Jessica was a grand affair, involving mobs of masqueraders, much carnival stuff, and ending, on Shylock's return, in a regular pogrom, during which Shylock's house is sacked, his goods thrown into the street and himself seized and thrown into the canal. Then comes Bassanio's casket-scene, in which he closes his eyes and gropes for the casket, leaving it all to luck and cutting out his best speech and the whole point of the love-theme of the play.

The trial scene, during which Portia, dressed as a lawyer and embellished with a pair of Harold Lloyd shell-rim spectacles, delivers the mercy speech, ends with Shylock actually signing the deed while egged on, on the one side, by the Christians, and on the other besought by the kneeling Israelites. Another race-riot follows, the Jews and Christians mixing in in a way to shame D. W. Griffith at his wildest.

But the high point is reached at the close of the play, when Shylock stalks into the garden at Belmont, and shouting for Jessica, gives her his blessing, or possibly his curse.

It must not be concluded from this, that the performance as such was not interesting, or not exceedingly well done. Of course it was not Shakespeare, and it surprised me to find in such a theatre, so free an adaption of a great classic. I had expected the same sort of scholarly and correct translation as we give to any of the French classics—Molière, Racine or even Rostand. The Shylock was very fine, very restrained and "modern"—a realistic money-lender, who scratched his head over the 3000 ducats in a most undignified manner. The Bassanio was of a graceful, romantic manner which no American actor can (or at least does) approach. In beauty of gesture and pose, to the last finger-tip, and in vocal

quality, he was exquisite to the point of affectation. But a French actor in a picturesque rôle can do it, where a non-Latin type would be ridiculous or effeminate.

The Portia was as delightful as only a beautiful and alluring French woman can be—and that is indescribable; even the hideous black spectacles failed to dull her brilliance or lessen her charm. The Launcelot Gobbo was the best I ever saw anywhere. The kind of clown, I imagine, Shakespeare knew and used in his own productions.

The production itself, viewed from American standards, was very shabby. An apron with steps was used, as in Barrymore's "Hamlet," and in many parts of scenes played on these steps, the actors were within two feet of the first row of the audience—easily within touching-distance. No foot-lights were used, but four powerful flash-lights from the balcony lighted the stage. Every seat was taken, and that means a parquette, a balcony, loge-boxes, three galleries and a "heaven" above these. I had a seat in the first row of the balcony, for which I paid about eighty-nine cents—this as against \$3.30 for Barrymore. Of course there is no comparison in the cost of the two productions, but it is the best Shakespeare Paris affords, just as Barrymore's production is New York's best, and it can be had here within reason. I am, etc.,

Paris.

HENRY C. KIEFER.

BOOKS.

A DEFENCE OF DON JUAN.

AMONG modern writers there are probably only two who could have written an original postscript to Casanova. Schnitzler is one; the other is, of course, Anatole France. No one knows better than M. France how to transpose narrative exquisitely into the key of the period, however alien, however archaic, that he treats. Almost all the good fairies of old Gaul must have been present at M. France's christening on the grey, leafy Quai Voltaire, and it was only after the last of them had flown away over the chimney-tops that his bad fairy arrived and announced portentously: "Yes, you shall be a great writer, but you shall never be a novelist. Those fatal gifts of irony and pity, of which we shall some day hear so much, will be more to you than art, and they will ever cloud your finest conceptions." The one thing that has always been impossible for M. France is to be objective. He is always the choragus to his characters, and did he not take the leading part so marvellously, he would be exasperating. Had he written of the last adventure of Casanova, the result would have been everything exquisite, but it would not have been Casanova. He would have soliloquized in the most enchanting idiom; the gesture would have been Casanova's but the voice would have been that familiar to the Villa Saïd.

Schnitzler, on the other hand, has beaten the French master at his own game. He has all of M. France's expertness in temporarily sinking his own modern self into the archaic background, with this single advantage, that he never afterward emerges. There are passages in "Casanova's Homecoming"¹ that might have been torn from the Memoirs themselves. One is carried back to the eighteenth century; the epoch of the supreme diarists who were great precisely because they were innocent of the romantic blague and literary self-consciousness which came in with Rousseau. These people may manufacture adventures but they never invent emotions. As Mr. Symons said of the Chevalier himself, they did not live to write; they wrote because they had lived. Happy age!

Despite the kind of sparkling delicacy with which Schnitzler contrives to enhance everything he writes,

his Casanova is as simply naturalistic as his prose style. This little novel is composed with refreshing candour. In the first chapter, the once fascinating Chevalier, no longer young and handsome, is walking discontentedly along a hot country road on the outskirts of Mantua. He is terribly bored. He has only two suits and cohabits with his landlady, having abandoned perforce the ideal pursuit of wonderful girls. It is for Venice herself that he now longs; the incomparable vision of its domes and waters calls to him like the mirage to a traveller in a waste land. Suddenly an old acquaintance overtakes him in a gig and begs him to pass a few days on his olive-farm near Mantua. Casanova assents, inwardly cursing all bores. Among the household is a young girl, Marcolina, beautiful, studious, chaste; and instantly his senses flame with the old desire. She has heard of his ill-fame, and regards the ageing adventurer with a feeling close to repulsion. Casanova begins to fear that he has found the phenomenon whose existence he has always doubted—a virtuous woman. There is an admirable account of a quiet evening at home, a card-party of faded Italian gentry. Early next morning, Casanova, concealed in an arbour, sees a young man climbing from the sill of Marcolina's window. He experiences that rage of lust, impotence and sorrow which seizes a man who sees the beloved and unattainable one easily possessed by another person; he swears to have Marcolina and he—but one must go to Schnitzler's own pages for an account so joyous and poignant.

What a lesson this novel is; what an antidote! How it proclaims in the teeth of all Freudians and mystagogues the sunlit affirmation that in matters of love $2+2=4$ and not *zero*. In this it is true to the period, and, in a very real sense, true to life as it ought to be lived if man could overcome his unaccountable impulse for self-torture. Those endless serpentine inhibitions and withdrawals, that thick darkness of emotional obscurantism with which the feverish and clinical fiction of Mr. D. H. Lawrence and his imitators has made us familiar, would have astonished the eighteenth century as utterly as they would have puzzled the Greeks. It is true that "Casanova's Homecoming" is invested with a certain air of nostalgia and melancholy which is wholly modern, but that is only because the novelist is writing of Casanova as an ageing man. The senescence of a man who has always loved, who continues to love, is this book's *raison d'être*, its problem. Let us grant, without more ado, that it is not a pleasant problem; that the eternal bad boys of literature should always be represented as young and fair, and that when they are no longer so, the curtain should fall upon their ardours and adventures. It is to the glory of Schnitzler's very high talent that he has posed the problem in a manner at once impressive and touching.

So little do we understand the old animalism, the ancient candour—so childlike that, beside our own muddy introspection in these matters, it seems almost virginal—that the great philanderers, the semi-mythical figures of a hundred love-legends, have come down to us rather in the light of villains and bogies than in their true aspect. One of the most vital of modern writers, Mr. Bernard Shaw, with his usual Puritan instinct, has even written a comedy in which the modern Don Juan is held up to the scorn of multitudes as the prince of rotters. But a moment's reflection will convince one that to be a really successful Don Juan requires a depth of idealism rarely to be encountered in the modern world. I use the word "successful" in the Paterian sense; "to burn always with that

¹ "Casanova's Homecoming." Arthur Schnitzler. New York: Thomas Seltzer. \$2.50.

hard, gemlike flame, to maintain that ecstasy is to be a *success* in life." Has the reader ever seriously reflected that "to flit from flower to flower," far from being the manifestation of a trivial and degraded character, is to reveal a vitality, a patience, an almost austere intensity in the pursuit of perfection which can, which ought to be, admired? Most of us, let us admit frankly, are not quite up to it. We are not of the blood of the martyrs. Trained in the naive traditions of the "prep" school and the Junior "prom," we lapse, almost before we are aware of it, into a cult of monogamy which may or may not be noble but which is certainly unimaginative. It is not so with that unconquerable idealist, Don Juan. For others, more happily constituted, the villa and the flivver; for him the open road, the waste land, the pathless sea and the lonely horizon. In journeyings often, in perils in the city, in perils among false brethren, in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and in thirst; baffled by a thousand disillusiones, he fares on with a stern ardour, an invincible belief that somewhere exists the Ideal, and in this faith he lives and dies. Old age is, of course, the only tragedy that can come to darken this sublime adventure of the senses, and before that inevitable Visitant, there is, unfortunately, only one thing to be said to his soul by this martyr of the Ideal: "Fool, would'st thou live for ever?"

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

POETRY OR WIT?

WHY, it has been asked by others besides Mr. Richard Aldington, is the writing of Marianne Moore so generally absent from most anthologies of contemporary American poetry? Why has she had to wait more than eight years for the publication of her first volume,¹ and why, even then, has it been necessary for a few friends to "pirate" her work and bring out her one volume in England? Why have critics applauded creations of far less originality while remaining silent—in these days of howling controversy they could scarcely plead ignorance—concerning an idiom as unique, however difficult, as hers? There are, doubtless, several contradictory answers to these questions. My own prejudiced conclusion is that, while Miss Moore has elected to offer her highly intellectualized dissertations in the form of poetry, she is not, in spite of the pattern of her lines, a poet. It is not to be inferred from this dogmatic finality, that I do not admire Miss Moore's acidulous and astringent quality. On the contrary, all of her work displays a surface of flickering irony, a nimble sophistication beneath which glitter the depths of a cool and continually critical mind. Hers is witticism of a strange genre; but it remains witticism. It is the critic and the wit rather than the poet who can combine words and ideas in such a pattern as:

There is a great amount of poetry in unconscious
Fastidiousness. Certain Ming

Products, imperial floor-coverings of coach
Wheel yellow, are well enough in their way but I
have seen something

That I like better—a

Mere childish attempt to make an imper-
fectly ballasted animal stand up,

A determinate ditto to make a pup

Eat his meat on the plate.

I see that I have involved myself in the snares of that tangled problem which concerns a definition of poetry. The effort to fix this fluctuant power in a phrase usually ends either in a hopelessly vatic gesture or a reckless leaping from one generality to another. In common with

most definers, I am driven to adopt both methods and to insist that, whatever else poetry may lack, it must have its roots in ecstasy, that it differs from pedestrian prose in the lift, the exaltation, the moment of rapture. This "lift" may be inherent in its subject; it may be evoked by the intensity of a communicated emotion or by a combination of verbal precision and musical passion. It starts, as Mr. Robert Frost has said, "with a lump in the throat, a homesickness or a love-sickness. It is an effort to find fulfilment. A complete poem is one where an emotion has found its thought—and the thought has found the words." It may have its basis in an idea, but it must reach out to something more. This something more is what seems to be lacking, not only in the cerebral lines of Miss Moore, but in the work of an entire unorganized though recognizable group. Although its products may be diverse, its hall-marks are identical: intellectual dexterity, technical preciosity and, as Mr. Aldington has pointed out, a tone that alternates between obscurity and condescension. In a provocatively controversial review of Mr. Waldo Frank's "City Block," Mr. Kenneth Burke illuminates our indecision from a somewhat more acute angle. "If we have to choose between an artist who is passionless and clever, and an artist who is tumultuous and non-clever . . . the former," concludes Mr. Burke, "would be nearer to art."

If one is prepared to grant this, if there can be a poetry without passion—and one could as easily imagine a music without sound—Miss Moore's achieves a special sort of distinction. Hers is no loose structure of fortunate or faltering phrases; the form of her expression is as hard as the contours of her thought. But the critical faculty predominates. If, for example, one compares Miss Moore's poem to George Moore with her prose diagnosis of the same subject, one finds it difficult to understand why this analyst writes so little in what seems to be her native medium. Nothing short of a perversity of choice explains the selection of the form of poetry for subjects and titles like "Pedantic Literalist," "In This Age of Hard Trying Nonchalance is Good And—." Such stanzas establish a mood of critical, half-scornful cleverness. But do they furnish a poetic communication? Are they, to ask the question which prompted this inquiry, related by anything more than their apparel to poetry? In spite of his admiration for Miss Moore's recondite brilliance, at least one reader is compelled to answer in the negative.

LOUIS UNTERMEYER.

A GREAT PREACHER.

PULPIT-ORATORY as an art seems in the United States to have grown out of fashion; either it is not cultivated or it is not popular. That there is an interest, however, in the orators of the past, is shown by the frequent appearances of compilations of ancient and modern eloquence. Of the French orators of the pulpit, Bossuet seems to be the best remembered, but one finds an occasional reference to both Fénelon and Bourdaloue. The title of this book¹ should have been, "Bourdaloue and the Court of Louis XIV," for Dr. Reville gives us a clearly sketched background of conditions in that brilliant, vicious and constantly interesting coterie at Versailles, which the Duke de St. Simon has made immortal.

There are two questions which often occur to casual readers of the Duke de St. Simon and of the "Letters of Madame De Sévigné." Did Bourdaloue and the court-preachers compromise in their discourses before the Sun King, the autocrat, the Prince who never neglected daily Mass but who for many years publicly kept mistress after

¹ "Poems," Marianne Moore. London: The Egoist Press.

¹ "Herald of Christ, Louis Bourdaloue, S.J., King of Preachers and Preacher of Kings. A Portrait." John C. Reville. New York: Schwartz, Kirwin & Fauss. \$1.55.

mistress? And, if they did not compromise, what was the secret of their power? It is well-known that the man who believed that he was France incarnate would not tolerate public contradiction. What court-preacher would have dared to hold up the ideals of Christian equality before those masters of men—of slaves, rather—Louis XIV or Henry VIII?

The romancers and Walter Savage Landor, in his "Imaginary Conversations," have settled this question to their own satisfaction by assuming that the Jesuit court-preachers condoned vice when it was royal, and were more than polite to Madame de Fontanges, Madame de Montespan and Mlle. de La Vallière; that they were very delicate in touching the conscience of the King! Dr. Reville answers these two questions, with the assistance of the proper documents, satisfactorily.

It was reasonable enough that Bourdaloue should not bring himself in contact with those ladies of the Court whose position was never for a moment concealed. The height of power which Madame de Montespan reached and the shamelessness of the aristocratic manners of the time is evident from the King's determination to have the children of the most important of all his mistresses accepted as presumptive heirs to the throne. It required some courage at that time for Bourdaloue to encourage Mlle. de La Vallière to leave the King and to enter the convent of the Carmelites. That other favourite, Angélique de Fontanges, turned to Bourdaloue on her death-bed, and even Madame de Montespan, the coldest-hearted and the most cynical of all, was not entirely indifferent to his preaching. At the end, she too accepted the doctrines he had taught in the brilliant chapel of the King.

Louis XIV loved the pomp of religious ceremony, and the etiquette of religion was to him part of the etiquette of the Court, but during the long years before his conversion, under the influence of Bourdaloue and of his wife, Madame de Maintenon, he never received the sacraments which are essential to what the French call "*pratiquent*." Anybody might attend Mass; the palace at Versailles was crowded with ladies who believed that temptation was made to be yielded to, who had occasional moments of repentance; but it would have been regarded as an unpardonable breach of etiquette if they had not been seen at Mass when the King arrived. Dr. Reville tells us that they sometimes turned their backs to the altar to adore His Majesty; and when he had become devout they attended vespers in the dusk, with little candles held between them and their missals, so that the King might not fail to recognize them. Dr. Reville declares that the conversion of the King was the cause of an excessive hypocrisy among the courtiers. Nevertheless Bourdaloue must have touched the hearts of some of these people by the fearlessness and truth of his sermons.

The children of the greater number of the French nobility, in the middle of the seventeenth century, were badly brought up. Like Louis himself, they were left in the hands of valets and maids or to the care of indifferent tutors. The father seems to have been either tyrannical or indifferent. He determined the careers of his sons and chose the *partis* of his daughters. These children were generally looked upon as tools for the aggrandizement of the family. In a settled condition of a society which held views of this kind, the words of Bourdaloue uttered before the flower of the French nobility seem amazing. He says:

In the management of your households, always respect the rights of God, and never infringe on those of your children. Leave them that same freedom which you wish yourselves and of which perhaps you have been so jealous. Do for them what you wished had been done for you, and if in this you have ever been wronged, do not retaliate on those who

are in no way responsible, and who besides ought to be so dear to you. Forget not their eternal salvation which is here at stake, and be not so heartless as to sacrifice it to your worldly views. Do not incur the risk of one day becoming the object of their maledictions and curses after having been the cause of their misfortune and woe. If you can not leave them a rich heritage, and if they may not boast of extensive wealth and estates, do not deprive them, if I may use the expression, of the sacred right of self-ownership. God does not oblige you to make them rich; He commands you to leave them free. (Sermon: 'Duties of Parents,' Vol. II, p. 9.)

Bourdaloue denounced that custom of the French nobility which obliged the daughters to enter convents because their fathers were too parsimonious or were not rich enough to give them a sufficient dot. In the presence of the King, he told the nobles that a girl of this kind "was a victim led to the altar." Here is an example of his plain speaking, at a time when the conventions of the noble families had become inflexible laws:

Her will forced and constrained, her lips sealed through fear and respect for a parent, whom she has always honoured and loved. In the midst of a ceremony, dazzling no doubt for the throng of spectators, but a mournful tragedy for the chief figure, she is presented to the priest, she becomes a victim and a sacrifice, which, far from glorifying or pleasing God, becomes odious, execrable in His sight and provokes His vengeance.

It is interesting to inquire what position Bourdaloue took on the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which deprived France of a great number of valuable citizens; but it seems that he was more concerned with the errors of Jansenism—of which he suspected the charming and admiring Madame de Sévigné—than with the political position of the Protestants in France. He disliked religious persecution in any form and, like Fénelon, he seems to have protested against the severity of the application of the Edict. He was evidently fully in sympathy with Pope Innocent XI, who begged King James II of England to intercede with Louis in order to ameliorate the position of the Huguenots. Louis, however, believed that the Huguenots in France were ready to play the part that the Puritans in England had played in the reign of Charles I.

Dr. Reville's book is distinctly useful and enlightening, and though he is evidently in love with his hero, his is not a case of special pleading. One would approve of him more if he loved Madame de Sévigné better, but he is remarkably just to Pascal, and we owe him some gratitude for having reminded us of the existence of the Abbé Dedieu's "*Le Rôle Politique des Protestants Français*," which helps to remove a vital epoch in the history of France from the region of merely theological controversy.

MAURICE FRANCIS EGAN.

SHORTER NOTICES.

WHEN Henry James set out to trace the emotions and reactions of people involved in conflict over the possession of a rare painting, he managed somehow to gain his effects without physical violence to the canvas itself. The picture remained upon the wall, an object around which wills clashed and passions eddied, but the novelist did not find it necessary to toss the painting, frame and all into the arena. Not so Mr. Snaith, who has taken a thesis at least remotely similar, and treated it in far different manner. "*The Van Roon*"¹ is the story of the discovery of a valuable painting, and of a struggle for possession of it. During the course of an exciting story, the picture itself, fortunately not a large one, travels in the tube, witnesses the first stages of seduction, is snatched from hand to hand, and reposes briefly in a parcel check-room. It scarcely has time to fulfill its æsthetic function, in fact; it is so occupied in usurping the function of the little pea at

¹ "*The Van Roon*." J. C. Snaith. New York: D. Appleton Company. \$2.00.

the county fair. Now you see it and now you don't! Aside from the fact that it exceeds the reasonable bounds of probability on occasion, the novel is a competent and well-constructed piece of writing. Mr. Snaith does a great deal for his heroine, but he is too modest to take the credit to himself; he says that Providence favours her. L. B.

THIS new life of Palestrina¹ is simply a rather conventional and perfunctory account of the facts of his life, with very little consideration of its significance. The only systematic discussion of the artistic tendencies of the Roman school is contained in the few pages headed "Concluding Remarks," and seems like a not very adequate afterthought. That the operatic movement of the early sixteenth century, killing as it did pure choral music, was not an unmixed benefit; that time-measurement in some degree enslaved rhythm; that the increasing modern disuse of the chorus somehow accompanies the decadence of religious feeling; these ideas are common to this and to most other books that compare our music with that of an older day. But what is cause and what effect; what, if anything, is to be done about it all—of this the writer gives us no inkling. There are appendixes, containing rather confused accounts of modes, clefs, and other technical matters. D. G. M.

No one who has resolved to forgo the reading of translations is likely to find his resolution weakened after looking through Mr. Ernest Boyd's version² of "Germinie Lacerteux." Mr. Boyd attacks his problem with considerable gallantry and is not without his moments of felicity, but a fully satisfactory transition from French to English is still beyond his powers. It is not that French must be transposed, like Italian, to a lower key, but that modulations, shadings and adjustments are constantly in demand. Through the English web woven by the present translator the physiognomy of the original text insistently peers, obtrudes, disconcerts and annoys. Mr. Boyd's introduction, however, is admirable, though its opening paragraph may seem nugatory; and his perspective, which goes as far back as Flaubert, is long enough for all practical purposes. Those who desire a longer one, may see "Germinie" as representing about the last step in that historical descent from a concern with the great and noble, such as occupied the early half of the seventeenth century, to the presentation of "the people" in our own times. The later phases of the movement are only too well known. The earlier steps—through Molière, Marivaux and Beaumarchais—are more important and (like all early steps) more worthy of attention. The aristocratic trend of the Goncourts, even in the handling of ultra-democratic material, may properly enough be stressed, yet much of their realism is in glaring black and white, like parts of Balzac's "Goriot" and Hugo's "Fantine," and too much of it has a cold, calculated, geometrical quality that does not move. One finds oneself wishing that the brothers had kept to the eighteenth century and to the Japanese. The volume is one of a series which has presented such Gallie heroines as Emma Bovary, Mademoiselle de Maupin, Manon Lescaut and Nana, and, as a manufactured book, shows the sumptuous, positive taste of Mr. Knopf. H. B. F.

MR. A. A. MILNE, as has frequently been said, is one of those writers of plays, oftener English than American, who with no theories of their own to affect the course of dramatic history, with no pet ideas to promulgate, yet have a recognizably individual temperament. The stories he chooses to present, the characters he is concerned to introduce to us, are of slighter consequence than the air with which the presentation and the introduction are made. Mr. Milne's particular flavour has too often been likened to Barrie's, to the younger man's disparagement. His whimsy is less fanciful than Barrie's; his accomplishment altogether less markedly an achievement. It is rather with Hubert Henry Davies and Haddon Chambers that he is to be compared. He treats his characters with a tolerant pleasantry that he easily induces his audiences to share. This attitude, joined with its almost inevitable counterpart, sentimentality, is displayed in his prefatory note to "The Dover

Road," contained in his latest volume.³ He there, with a delightfully ingratiating suavity, accounts for the changes in the printed version from the more conventional ending recently seen on the New York stage. In the play itself, Mr. Milne invites us to accept an absurdly amusing situation. Once accepted (with no questions asked) he provides us with pleasant entertainment. In "The Great Broxopp" he makes us acquainted with an equally absurd and an almost equally amusing character, the great Broxopp himself, the man who made Broxopp's Beans for Babies a household phrase. Once the acquaintanceship is acknowledged (again, with no questions asked) we may sit back and enjoy his fluctuating career. But the moment analysis begins, the charm vanishes. The third play in the volume, "The Truth About Blayds," comes nearer to a real idea than Mr. Milne's work usually does; but it illustrates the author's dramatic attitude even better than the others. The truth about Blayds—that the poems which made the reputation of that famous nineteenth-century poet were not really composed by him at all—is defeated by a combination of family pride and a sentimentality that loses interest in the issue. Nowhere is the struggle inherent in the theme allowed to appear as a matter of ethical importance. Truth itself is made to seem a paltry thing beside the reputation of a family and a love that is given a second chance after an interval of eighteen years. Blayds himself, in his single appearance, and Blayds's son-in-law, who is preparing a biography of him on the Boswellian scale, are more like real people than most of Mr. Milne's personages. Altogether the volume may be recommended for mild enjoyment; it is pleasant, not momentous. R. A. P.

A REVIEWER'S NOTEBOOK.

"DEGENERATION in the Great French Masters" is not the happiest of titles for M. Jean Carrère's book of essays. It has, for the English reader, almost as many misleading connotations as the original title, "Les Mauvais Maîtres"; and that is a pity, for the theme of the book lifts it quite above the level of current controversy. It might seem at first that nothing could be more disputable than to attack as "bad" such writers as Balzac, Stendhal, Flaubert, Baudelaire, Zola. In reality, since æsthetic values are not in question, or rather since M. Carrère himself enters with profound sympathy the æsthetic world of all these writers, it is impossible not to accept the verdict of the book. Everything, in matters of this kind, depends upon the altitude and the comprehensiveness of the author's standpoint, and M. Carrère has attempted to see his French novelists and poets as a Greek of the fifth century, a Christian of the type of Saint Vincent de Paul or some worthy companion of Rabelais might see them; in the light, that is to say, of the most broadly human conception of the good life. To criticism of this kind, so often and so paradoxically the product of narrow, peevish and insensitive minds, literary criticism in the ordinary sense, æsthetic criticism, has nothing to oppose. In two or three of his essays M. Carrère indulges in special pleading; otherwise he speaks in the name of the traditional wisdom of humanity. It is impossible to resist him unless we deny that writers do, in fact, possess "influence."

Now this, of course, is just what æsthetic critics are prone to deny. M. Carrère tells us in one of his notes that when his essays first appeared Remy de Gourmont took him to task for having attributed so much "influence" to writers. "According to Gourmont at that moment," M. Carrère says, "literature had no influence whatever, either good or bad, and its only importance was in the ability of the writers and the interest of their work." It is natural that most critics should hold this view: it relieves them from so many disturbing thoughts and enables them to fix their minds upon concrete problems of style and organization. Nevertheless, M. Carrère says that great were his surprise and joy when later he discovered in one of Gourmont's essays the question: "Who, in the early years of the nineteenth century, led astray the soul of France? Probably it was, above all others,

¹ "Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina. His Life and Times." Zoe Kendrick Pyne. New York: Dodd, Mead and Co. \$2.50.

² "Germinie Lacerteux." Edmond and Jules de Goncourt. Translated, with an Introduction, by Ernest Boyd. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$4.00

³ "Three Plays." A. A. Milne. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. \$2.00.

Chateaubriand." "I could not," he adds, "find any more precise formula to confirm my own opinion. If Chateaubriand did indeed lead astray the soul of France, it shows that literature has an influence, good or bad, on souls and morals: which was just what I had to show." But how could this ever have been doubted? Why should Napoleon, for example, a shrewd man, have taken such pains to control the reading of schoolboys if novels and poems left no traces in the mind? It sufficiently proves the decadence of civilization, of which Spengler is only the last to remind us, that a critic could make such an admission as Gourmont made about Chateaubriand without feeling that he had touched there upon a supreme problem for criticism.

THIS is the problem that concerns M. Carrère. He assumes that everything has always existed in man, every impulse, every possibility; that human nature is highly suggestible, that poets and novelists, as genuine creators, have the faculty of evoking in us every variety of feeling, and that "the good poet, the beneficent master, is the builder of cities, the creator of heroes, the inspirer of energy, the giver of light, the sun-like, radiant being." He is a solar, as distinguished from a lunar spirit, the true child of Orpheus. Here we have the classical ideal, phrased once more with an irresistible charm, the same ideal that Whitman expressed in his essay on Poe: "I wanted, and still want for poetry, the clear sun shining, the fresh air blowing—the strength and power of health, not of delirium, even amid the stormiest passions—with always the background of the eternal moralities." And it is very much as Whitman would have regarded them that M. Carrère regards Chateaubriand, Musset, Baudelaire, Verlaine. Take his list of the five chief sentiments celebrated by Verlaine, into whose life and art he enters nevertheless with an extraordinary sympathy:

1. Fear of struggle, submission to fate, "saturnism."
2. Stupor and oblivion in pleasure and love.
3. Sadness without cause, despair.
4. Attempt to rise, prayer, morbid mysticism.
5. Final fall, renunciation of all effort, definitive abdication.

"If the man is a poet, a great poet," says M. Carrère, "a marvellous inventor of rhythm, one of those privileged beings whose every sensation is transmuted into a figure, and every vision translated into imperishable language, then, by the irresistible prestige of genius, the ideas, the dreams, the desires of this predestined mortal infiltrate stealthily into the mind of all who feel his charm, and they provoke there the same mood." That being so, is it debatable that Verlaine has indeed contributed to enervate and sterilize many minds?

OR, to choose one other case, take Balzac. It is a truism that Balzac, by his creations, helped to form a new society. Paul Bourget insists on it, Emile Faguet dwells on it: after Balzac the types of Balzac emerged in French society. But which of these types? "Has some millionaire ruined whole families in making his own fortune?" M. Carrère asks. "A Balzac hero. Has some journalist made wealth by selling his pen? A Balzac hero. Has some juggler with money come out of jail and risen high in the banking-world? A Balzac hero. Is this other openly accused by everybody of cheating and blackmail, yet has the red ribbon in his button-hole? A Balzac hero." And M. Carrère adds: "Anger against great filibusters is now not merely changed into indulgence; it has given place to admiring astonishment. And it is to Balzac we owe this." Partly, no doubt: but why? Because the careerist, the type whose one aim is to succeed, had for Balzac such an immense fascination that he was impelled to picture men of this type as heroes. It

is upon them that he spends all the magic and the tenderness of his imagination, while, as M. Carrère says, "he could never draw the silhouette of a really great man without some failure which makes it ridiculous."

Who can deny that the creative mind possesses this faculty of making ducks and drakes of human beings and their energies? We have a parallel case in the psychology of advertising, based as it is entirely on the principle of human suggestibility. It is also true that most of our American magazine-stories are half-consciously calculated to induce a mood of which the advertisers of motor-cars and other beneficiaries of the "high standard of living" may take advantage. Or consider that character in Dostoevsky who commits murder at the instigation of a page of Nietzsche; or the numerous Werthers who were only waiting for the bullet of Goethe's Werther in order to take their own lives; or, to pass to other spheres, the minds that have moulded themselves on the "Imitation of Christ" or the "Book of the Courtier," or waxed fat in the contemplation of the image of Napoleon. M. Carrère is surely not mistaken in saying that the poet, in his power to create an independent world, may be "either magnificent or terrible"; for he invents moulds into which, thanks to the force of his genius, human nature is impelled to pour itself. And what determines the character of these moulds? Without doubt, the character of the poet himself. In each of his essays M. Carrère traces the defect in the world of the poet he is examining to the mind from which this world emerged. To mention a single instance, it is true that Balzac, the provincial, as Flaubert said, who was "astonished" by luxury, "shared the cupidities of his ambitious heroes and envied the conquests of the conquerors of life." Even if M. Carrère had not quoted that letter to his sister in which he expatiates on the "opportunity for domination" that the Countess Hanska's salon is going to give him, we should still have remembered the golden dreams that drew him into the world of business.

EVIDENTLY, then, genius is a force as irresponsible as electricity. It can attach itself to any sort of character, any sort of mind: it can invest equally with a magical beauty the impulse to struggle and the impulse to yield, the sunlight and the moonlight of the senses. How well Nietzsche understood this, he who, in his notes on Renan, George Sand, George Eliot, Carlyle and so many other writers of the nineteenth century, invented, as one may say, a new variety of literary criticism, based on physiology, which has been neither refuted, superseded nor developed. He saw, in his own way, what all the classical critics have seen, and what M. Carrère sees, that literature is something more and something other, than literary; more, that is, than a source of pleasure and interest. To be sure, the criticism that concerns itself with the development and economy of talent is no less necessary than the criticism that is concerned with the direction of talent: we must have the force and the ability first before we can use it. But is it too much to say that, having talent, we ought to be able, instead of letting it run loose like a force of nature, like water and fire that burn and destroy, to turn it into the channels that nourish life? The great ages knew how to economize talent and direct it at the same time: they produced writers who were at once "great" and, in M. Carrère's sense, "good"—that is to say, in Goethe's sense, "healthy." Criticism, if it is to restore this happy equilibrium, must define the good life and endow its conception with magnetic properties; and on the other hand, it must seek through every agency, social, economic, philosophical, religious, to transform the human environment.

A useful citizen.

THE newsdealer is first cousin to the bookseller, and sometimes he is a bookseller too. He is the familiar of his neighbourhood; no tradesman is on quite so intimate a footing with his customers, and none knows as many persons in his vicinity, as the newsdealer. He is so important to us all that we forget to think about him, just as we never stop to think that our heart is beating unless reminded by an occasional warning signal. We become aware of the newsdealer, too, only when something goes wrong: when our habit is interrupted, usually by some occurrence for which the newsdealer is not to blame.

He is friend to all classes and all ages; he satisfies the mental cravings of the studious and the frivolous. How well do we remember the favourite periodical literature of our very early youth: the *Golden Days* which contained most delectable material that would doubtless be severely frowned upon by the experts who, to-day, choose wisely and scientifically the fiction on which the youthful mind should unfold. At eleven o'clock every Saturday morning we would make our timid approach to the stationery shop at which the *Golden Days* was for sale and, once the paper was under our arm, we would hurry home for a day of vicarious romance and adventure.

It seems quite natural to discuss with the newsdealer the relative merits of newspapers and magazines, and affairs of the day. We expect him to have opinions by virtue of his calling, and we find ourselves listening respectfully, or arguing seriously, as we would not think of doing with our tailor or grocer. Only printers are comparable to newsdealers with respect to the automatic license to discuss with authoritative mien every subject under the sun. Certain serious matters—say immortality and infant damnation—we can think of talking about with our undertaker, but in all that concerns the affairs of this life there is none to match the newsdealer and his brothers in the related crafts.

We are saying a word for this useful member of society because we so often dwell on our desire to swell the list of those who receive the FREEMAN by mail every week. We have no wish to interrupt the friendly relations between readers who purchase at stands and the men who sell to them. If we did not know of the bond, our correspondence would make us aware of it. Many readers tell us that they would subscribe if it were not for their loyalty to a faithful merchant.

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